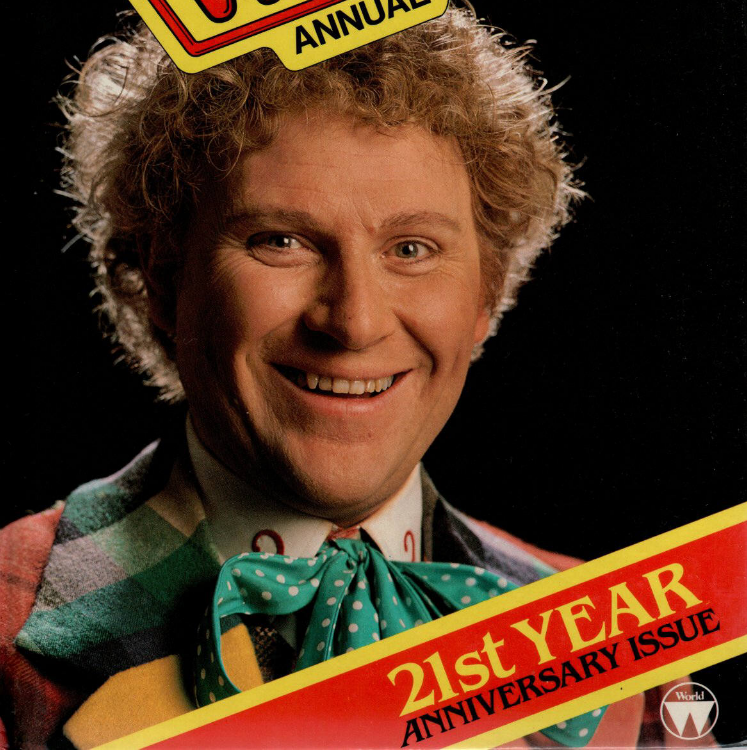
BBC tv

DOCTOR WHO
ANNUAL



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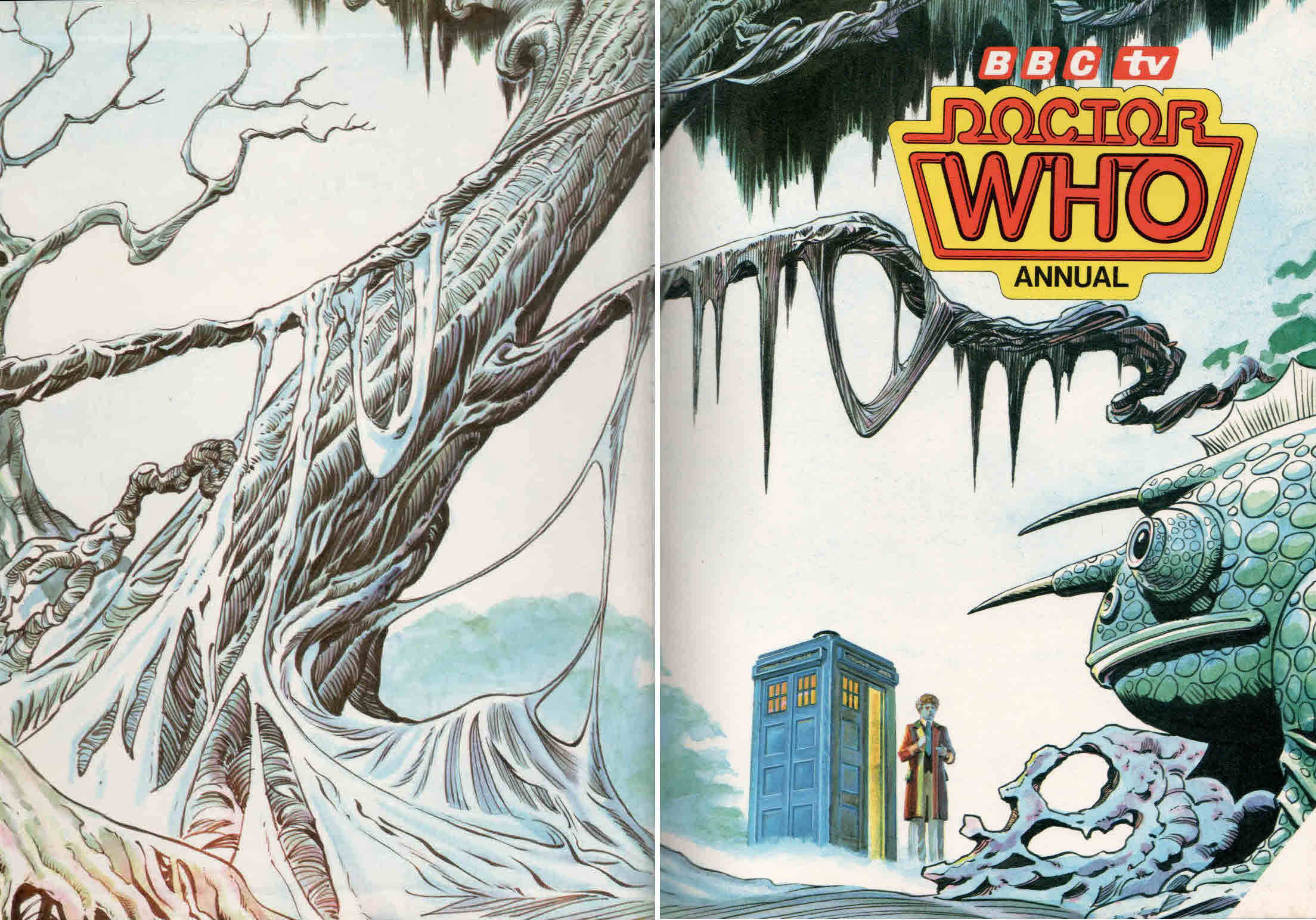

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Contents

Battle Planet 5
Doctor Who: The Designer 12
Day of the Dragon 19
The Real Hereward 25
The Deadly Weed 30
Vorton's Revenge 36
Special Effects 40
The Time Savers 46
The Mystery of the Rings 56

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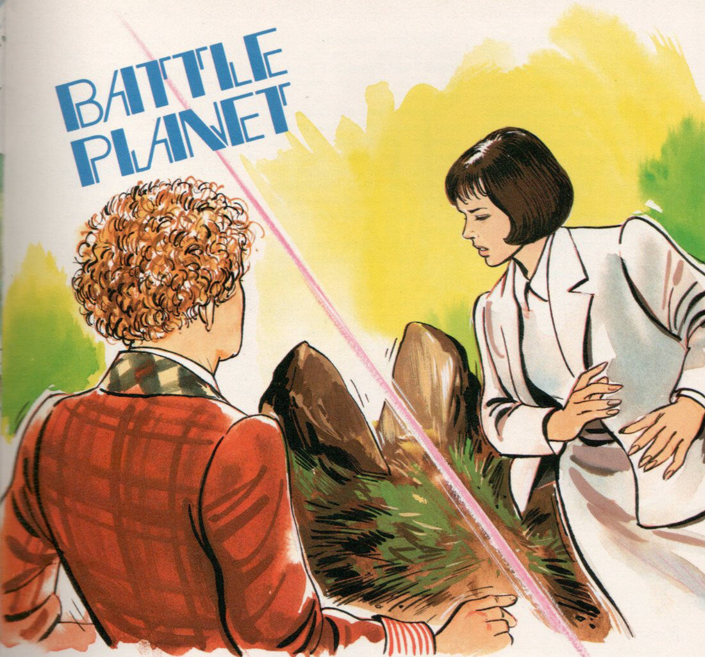
BATTLE PLANET



The Doctor looked about him, casting a slightly perturbed glance at the endless fields around the Tardis.

"Alright, Doctor," said Peri in a resigned tone. "Where are we this time?"

"Well, according to the Tardis, we should be on Exar 3," replied the Doctor. "But this looks nothing like I remember it."

"Typical," muttered Peri under her breath.

"What did you say?" asked the Doctor, only half listening.

"It looks like Earth," said Peri.

"Oh no," said the Doctor. "The Tardis isn't *that* far off course!"

Suddenly, a laser beam cut through the air, narrowly missing them, and finding its mark on a small rock, splitting it cleanly in two.

Taken by surprise, Peri shot a horrified look at the rock, then stared all around her.

"Where did that come from?" she exclaimed.

"Let's not wait to find out," said the Doctor as they turned to dash for the Tardis.

Another bolt from the mysterious laser beam gave its own unspoken orders.

"I don't think we're going anywhere," whispered the Doctor.

"Doctor, I feel a bit strange," said Peri, folding her arms about her. "It's a kind of force . . . the pressure is crushing . . . I can't breathe . . ."

"And a feeling that your very soul is being sucked from you?" said the Doctor, fighting hard against the awful sensation of feeling as though he was being turned inside out. But Peri had already collapsed. He was dimly aware of a bright golden light, before he too sank into the realms of unconsciousness.

"Oh, my whole body feels as though it's got a hangover!" moaned Peri, returning to consciousness some time later. "*What* did *who* do to us?" Then, as her eyes focused on the surroundings, she added, "And where are we . . . I seem to remember asking that not long ago."

"Yes, I wasn't sure then," said the Doctor. "I'm even less sure now."

He got up and started to study the chamber they were imprisoned in. Everything was gold, the furniture and the contents . . . all gold. The Doctor picked up a goblet and scrutinised it.

"Is there any water in it?" asked Peri.

The Doctor shook his head. "You don't drink water from such a valuable goblet as this," he said.

"Right now, the water would be more valuable to me than the goblet!" said Peri with a hand to her throat. "I'm so thirsty . . . aren't you?"

"A trifle," said the Doctor. "I think we were hit by some kind of moisture evaporator. Enough moisture was taken from our bodies to render us senseless, but not enough to kill us. The pressure and other sensations were caused by the speed of the dehydration process."

A door slid silently open and a small being, also all gold, shuffled into the room, swaying from side to side as it moved.

It shuffled towards the Doctor and jabbed him with a sharp talon that protruded from its chest.

"Ow!" he shouted. "Well, the natives certainly aren't friendly!"

The little being jabbed him again, motioning him towards the door. "Will you stop that!"

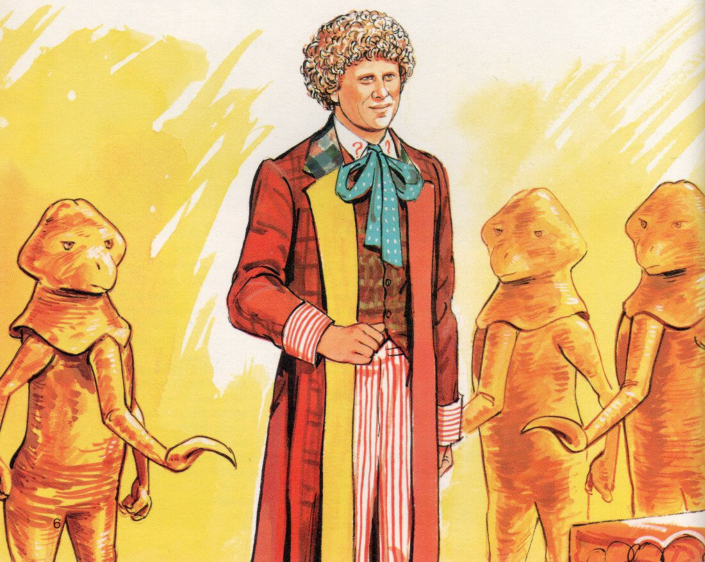
Peri moved to join them, but the being spun round to halt her, extending its lethal talon menacingly. A circle of gold light shone from its chest as it emitted a warning "BZZP!"

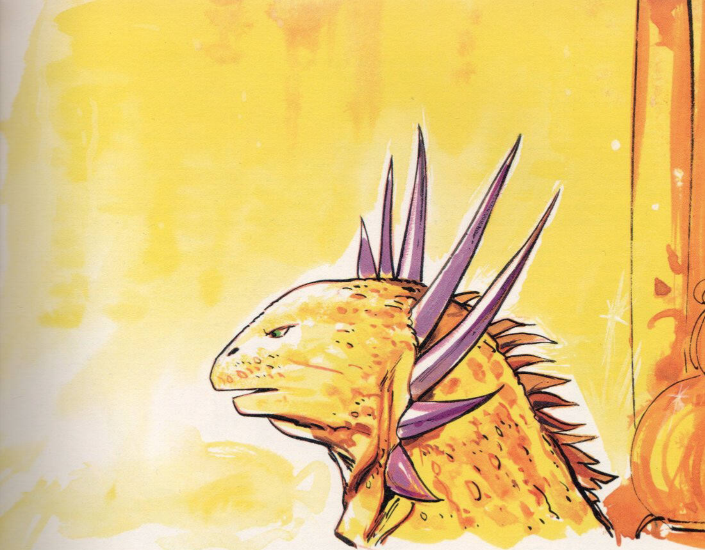
"I think that means they don't want you yet," said the Doctor.

"Doctor!" shouted Peri in a panic as she watched him disappear through the opening, and the door slid shut again, separating them.

The Doctor was led through a maze of corridors, and although he tried to keep track of where he was, he had to admit defeat before long.

"Any point in asking you where we're going?" asked the Doctor flippantly. But the little creature remained silent, acknowledging him only with even more unfriendly prods to move him on.





Eventually, they came to another larger gold chamber where an army of identical golden beings stood in military-style rows, lining two sides of the chamber. Between them, standing on a dais, was another golden figure, much taller and grander than the rest, with features resembling a lizard and purple spikes encircling his head.

He fixed the Doctor with a discomfiting stare. For a few awkward moments there was silence, then this central figure shattered the silence with a gurgling noise that could be compared to a human voice speaking under water.

"Welcome, stranger," he said. "Whom have I the pleasure of addressing?"

The unexpected politeness from such an awesome looking figure surprised the Doctor.

"I am the Doctor," he replied. "Who are you?"

"I am Ranon, the Guardian of these people, the Debans, and this is the planet Belstar," explained Ranon. "I'm sorry to have brought you here against your will, but we are in desperate need of assistance. Yours was the first craft our Homing Link-up Monitor picked up."

"Picked up?" repeated the Doctor. "I don't understand."

"Once your craft entered our orbit, our Homing Link-up Monitor registered it, and our Galactic Co-ordinator Intercept took control of it, bringing you here to us," said Ranon.

"You must need assistance badly to kidnap the first craft to stray into your orbit," said the Doctor flatly.

"We do, Doctor. We are at war with the Siros who share our planet. They want full control over our sister planets, Lostar and Kristar . . . and they will destroy us to get it! All the secrets of those planets are absorbed in a blue rock that is kept in the Tower of Selsor. The Siros have seized it and it is entombed in the Crypt of Pimo," said Ranon.

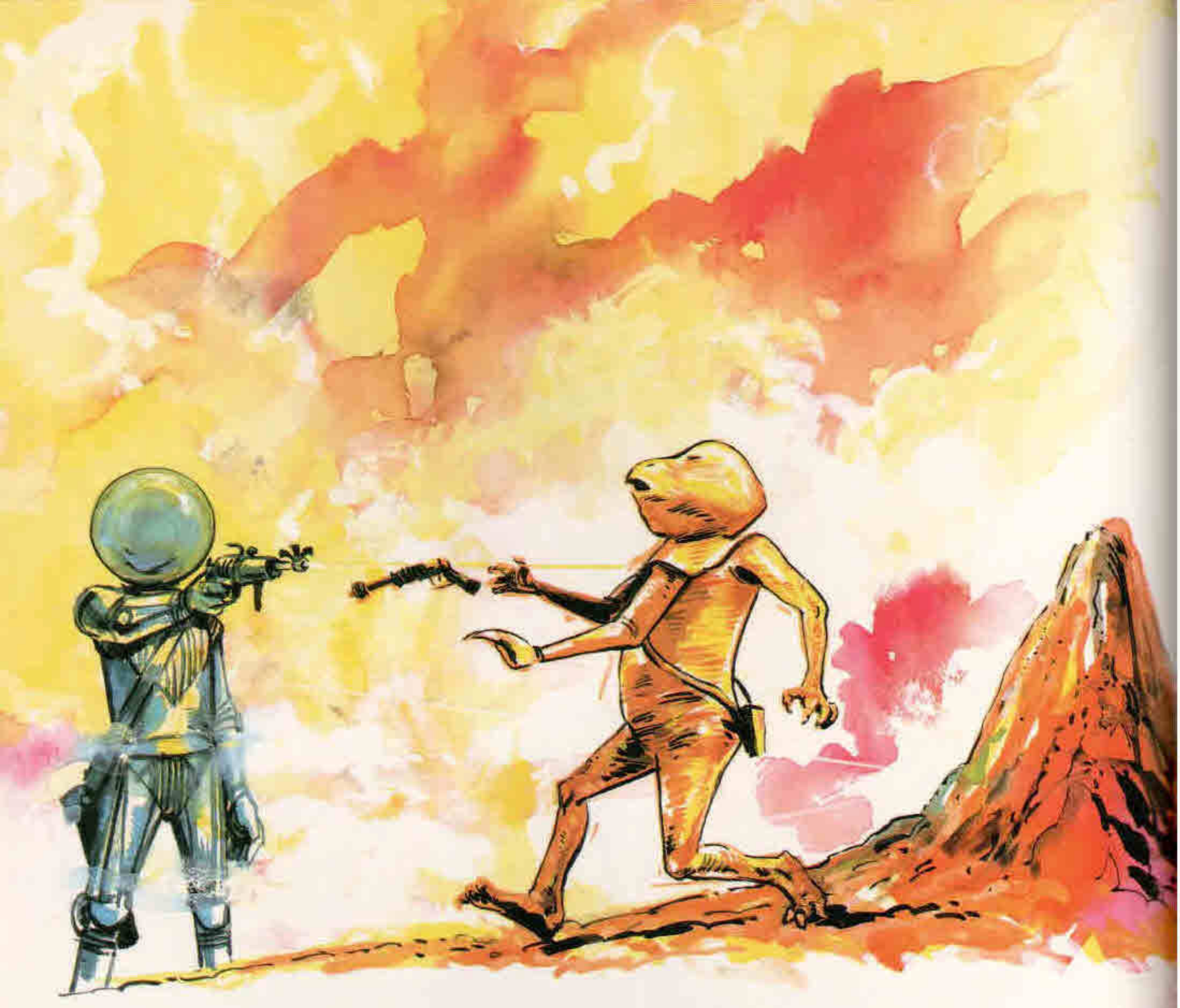
"Your people seem well able to take care of themselves," the Doctor said, remembering their capture. "Why do you need my help?"

"The Tower of Pimo is in the Nomed Zone . . . an evil place," explained Ranon. "The Siros are equipped to go there; we are not."

A rumble from above warned them that the Siros were again on the rampage.

"You'd better hurry, Doctor, there's no time to argue," shouted Ranon. "If you don't go now, you'll be destroyed with the rest of us!"

"How do we find this zone?" asked the Doctor, shouting above the din.



"Follow the largest rock formation. Half way, you'll see a cave; that is the gateway to the Nomed Zone," said Ranon. "And take this ring," he added, taking it from his finger and handing it to the Doctor. "It will automatically beam you back to our base."

The rows of Debans had broken from their ranks and were rushing around in organised chaos, arming themselves with laser guns. The Doctor looked quickly round the chamber, the gravity of Ranon's words registering on his brain.

"Peri!" he shouted and raced back to the chamber were they'd been imprisoned.

"Doctor! Where did they take you?" she cried when he reached her.

"Never mind that now," he replied. "We've got a mission to carry out."

As they followed the Debans to find a way to the outside world, the Doctor recapped on his encounter with Ranon. Outside, the air was thick with smoke and lasers flashed everywhere.

"Trust us to get involved in a war!" shouted Peri, scrambling over rocks and wincing as a shower of small stones were disturbed and gashed her hand.

"Keep down!" cried the Doctor, spotting a blue humanoid monster with a huge silver ball as a head. Although the ball had no features, it rotated in a fashion that convinced the Doctor it was able to see.

"That's obviously a Siro – do you think it's seen us?" asked Peri.

In answer to her question, the Siro turned towards their hiding place and fired its weird-looking gun at them. Just next to them, a group of rocks disintegrated into dust.

"Goodness!" exclaimed Peri. "Remind me not to try and make friends with him!"

At their lack of movement, the Siro lost interest and went on his way. The Doctor examined the rock that had just been reduced to dust.

"A CP10 death ray," said the Doctor. "What it did to that rock, it can do to people too."

Peri shivered. "I'd rather not think about that," she said. "We can't be far from the Nomed Zone now. I wonder why they call it that?"

"Well, backwards it spells 'Demon' . . . not very inviting!" replied the Doctor.

In front of them, a Deban was about to turn his laser on a Siro, when another Siro appeared behind him and levelled his CP10 at him. There was a yellow flash, and the Deban momentarily froze before vanishing into mid-air and being transformed into dust.

"Ashes to ashes, dust to dust," whispered the Doctor. "I think we'd better lie very low, Peri."

A little further along, they came to some loose shale.

"Be careful here," warned the Doctor, looking warily at the long drop to a bottomless pit.

A sudden shot from a Siro's CP10 took them off guard and, in their dash for cover, the shale beneath their feet dislodged.

"Aaaagh!" The Doctor lost his balance and tumbled off the rocks.

"Doctor!" screamed Peri, picking her way carefully to the edge. Peering over, she saw no sign of the Doctor, just the empty greyness of the pit yawning before her. Refusing to think the worst, she called out, "Doctor! Are you OK? Where are you?"

She held her breath as a painful silence followed. "Doctor!" she called again. "Where are you?"

Once more silence reigned for a few seconds, then a scrabbling sound caught her ears, like someone moving somewhere below. She craned her neck and listened hard.

"Ouch!" cried an indignant voice.

Peri breathed a sigh of relief. "Oh, Doctor, I thought you were a gonner!"

"No need to worry about me, Peri. You should know that by now." The Doctor's voice drifted up to her a few moments before he came into sight.

"That's true," thought Peri, smiling to herself. "Can you get back up OK?" she called.

"Actually, I think you should come down to me instead," called the Doctor. "I've found a door that could be the entrance to the Nomed Zone."

"Down there?" shouted Peri.

"Ranon didn't mention how perilous it was to reach it . . . I'm not surprised," shouted the Doctor. "Can you manage to get down a little more safely than I did?"

"You know me, Doctor," called Peri. "I'll try anything once!"

Half crawling and half falling she reached the Doctor, thankful she had made the descent safely, but still insecure on the narrow ledge.

"Now then," said the Doctor,

examining the door. "How do we get in, I wonder?"

As he continued his examination, the door began to open very slowly. He and Peri ducked behind the rocks as an army of Siros marched out to join their comrades in their war with the Debans. It didn't immediately close, and the Doctor and Peri had just enough time to slip inside before it shut again, trapping them.

"Well, the Nomed Zone appears to be a complex of caves," said the Doctor, looking all around him. The walls were encrusted with gold nuggets, and the Doctor and Peri stood entranced.

Peri reached up to stroke one. "I've never been so close to . . . aaagh!" Before she finished, the floor slid from under them, and they plummetted into a chamber below.

"Ooh," moaned Peri, her head in her hands. "Life on Belstar is a bit too exhausting for me."

"Never mind, it looks like all our sufferings have paid off," said the Doctor, looking straight ahead of him.

Peri followed his gaze. "The blue rock!" she exclaimed, seeing it standing in all its glory on a pedestal in the middle of the chamber. Then, noticing the lack of security, she added, "Why isn't anyone guarding it?"

"Ranon said this zone's lethal to the Debans. With no other enemies on Belstar, obviously the Siros don't feel there's a need to guard it."

"It looks too easy," said Peri, feeling very vulnerable.

"You mustn't worry until we're given something to worry about," said the Doctor, slipping the rock into his pocket

That moment soon came. As they ran out of the chamber, five Siros rounded the corner, coming face to face with them.

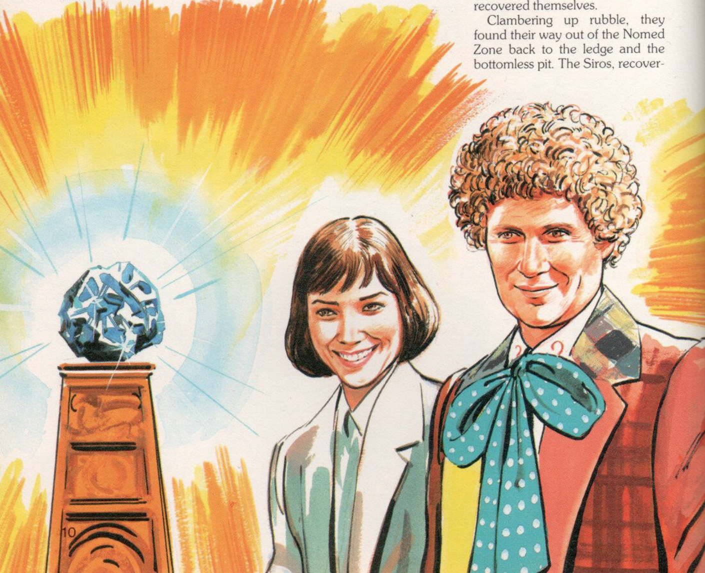
"I think it's time we used that ring," Peri whispered, as one of the Siros levelled his CP10 at them.

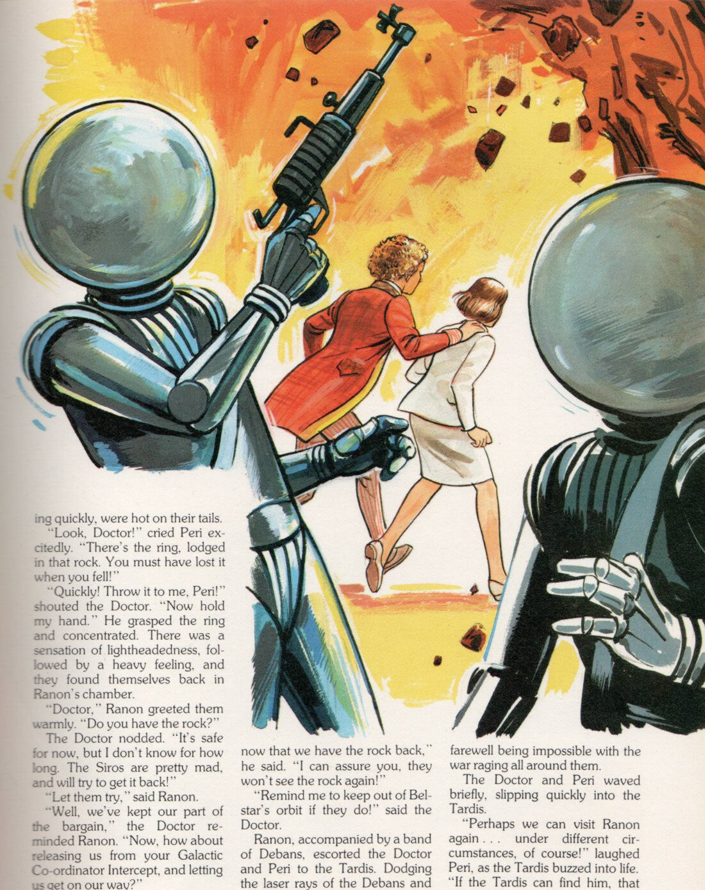
The Doctor felt frantically for the ring Ranon had given him. "That's easier said than done," he hissed. "I seem to have mislaid it!

"Mislaid it! How?" Peri was mortified.

The Doctor's keen eyes caught the Siro's finger settling on the trigger of his CP10. He threw himself at Peri just as a buzzing noise emitted from it and part of the cave wall behind them crumbled, bringing rubble showering down and the threat of the entire chamber caving in. The distraction was enough for the Doctor and Peri to make a rapid exit while the Siros recovered themselves.

Clambering up rubble, they found their way out of the Nomed Zone back to the ledge and the bottomless pit. The Siros, recover-





ing quickly, were hot on their tails.

"Look, Doctor!" cried Peri excitedly. "There's the ring, lodged in that rock. You must have lost it when you fell!"

"Quickly! Throw it to me, Peri!" shouted the Doctor. "Now hold my hand." He grasped the ring and concentrated. There was a sensation of lightheadedness, followed by a heavy feeling, and they found themselves back in Ranon's chamber.

"Doctor," Ranon greeted them warmly. "Do you have the rock?"

The Doctor nodded. "It's safe for now, but I don't know for how long. The Siros are pretty mad, and will try to get it back!"

"Let them try," said Ranon.

"Well, we've kept our part of the bargain," the Doctor reminded Ranon. "Now, how about releasing us from your Galactic Co-ordinator Intercept, and letting us get on our way?"

An expression that could be interpreted as a smile crossed Ranon's face. "Of course, Doctor. We can handle the Siros ourselves now that we have the rock back," he said. "I can assure you, they won't see the rock again!"

"Remind me to keep out of Belstar's orbit if they do!" said the Doctor.

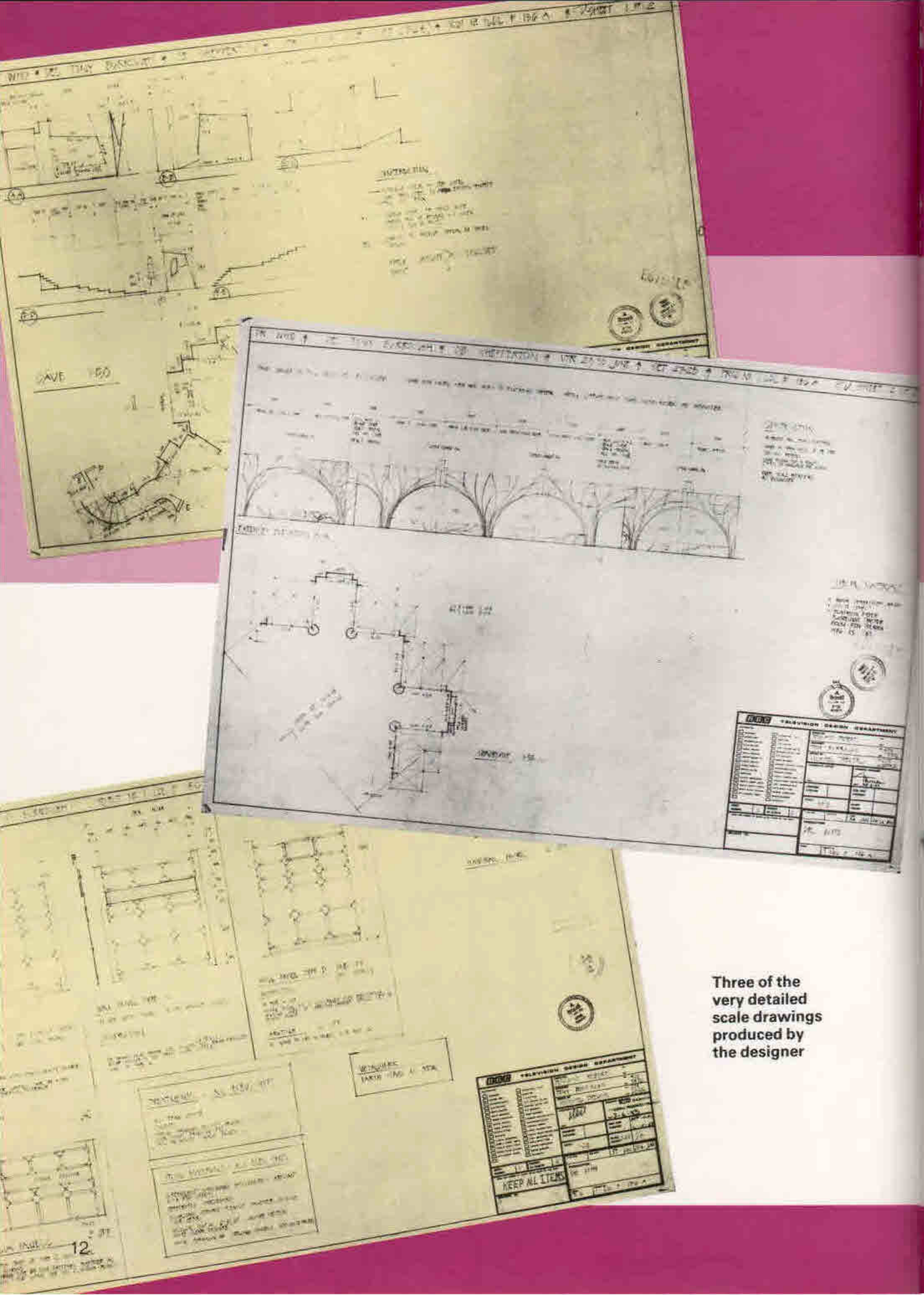
Ranon, accompanied by a band of Debans, escorted the Doctor and Peri to the Tardis. Dodging the laser rays of the Debans and the CP10s of the Siros they reached the Tardis safely.

"Farewell, and thank you, Doctor," said Ranon, a proper farewell being impossible with the war raging all around them.

The Doctor and Peri waved briefly, slipping quickly into the Tardis.

"Perhaps we can visit Ranon again . . . under different circumstances, of course!" laughed Peri, as the Tardis buzzed into life. "If the Tardis can find him, that is!"

"Oh, that would present no problem!" the Doctor laughed back. "*Ranon* would find *us!*"



Three of the very detailed scale drawings produced by the designer

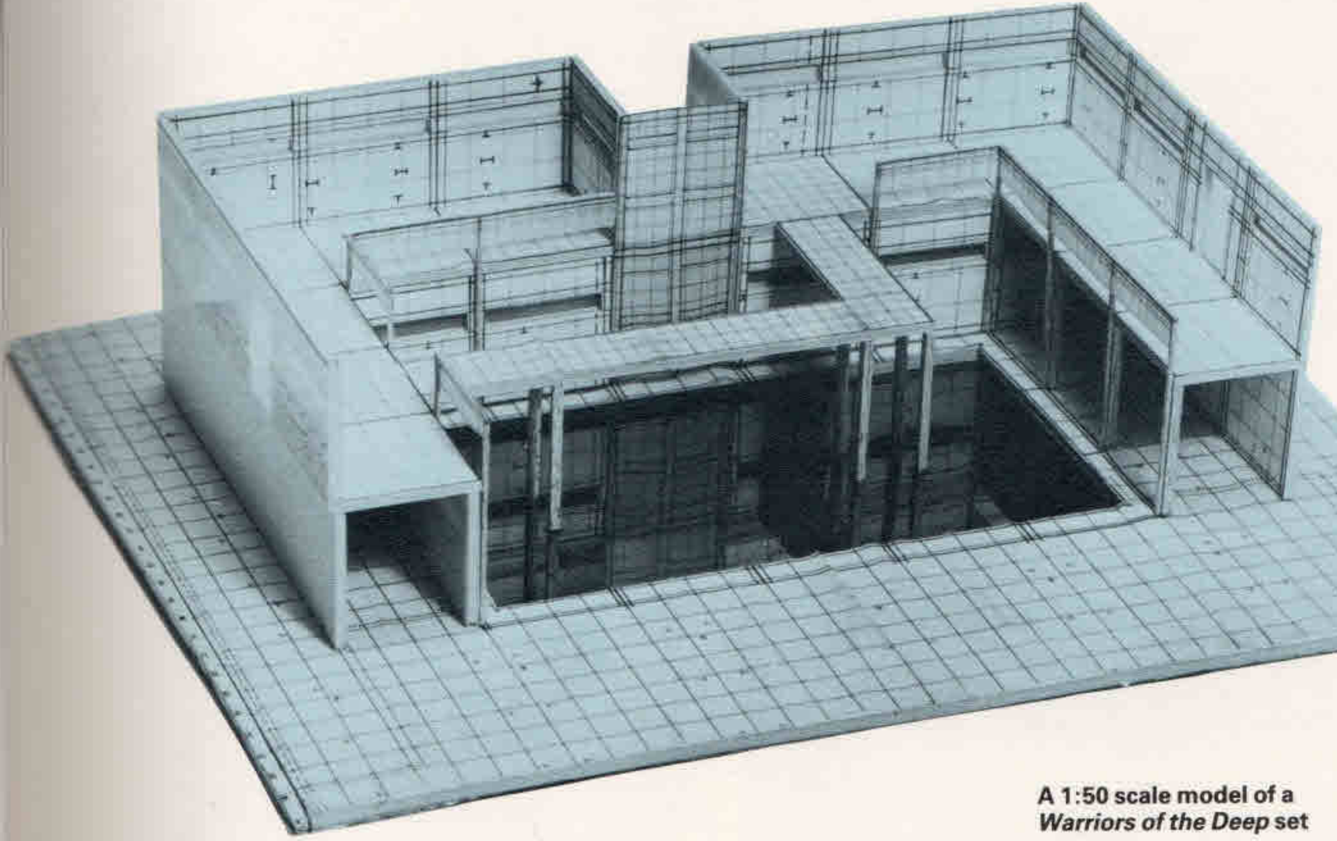
The Designer

by Brenda Apsley

The designer is the person responsible for the "look" of a TV programme, the person who creates the environment for the story to take place in. I went along to the BBC to talk to Tony Burrough to find out just what creating that "look" involves . . .

How is a designer selected for a particular show or series?

It's basically a question of matching job and designer. On *Doctor Who*, for instance, Tony and producer John Nathan-Turner know each other quite well, and have worked together successfully in the past, so they will plan to work together if schedules allow. The producer will use different designers to create different "looks". There are a number of *Doctor Who* stories per season, and



A 1:50 scale model of a *Warriors of the Deep* set each will probably have a different designer. There is an element of choice in that certain designers prefer certain types of programme, but they are all very versatile, and will work on a very wide range of shows, from light entertainment to costume drama – to *Doctor Who*. A large peg board at the TV centre details who is available, and when, so time and other commitments can dictate who works on what.

What happens once the designer has been chosen?

The designer's first job is to read the script. The designer doesn't usually have any contact with the author, but the script will yield important details, particularly if the action takes place in a specific period of history. The designer's job is to give the story its "feel", and this is often dictated by the script. For instance, in the *Doctor Who* Warriors of the Deep story the sea base complex at the bottom of the ocean was a military establishment, so that dictated a spare, clinical look; no frills and flounces. The designer, producer and director all discuss the overall "feel" of the show, what colours will be used, and any visual effects that will be used. This is of particular interest to the director, who will control what is actually shown in the TV screen.

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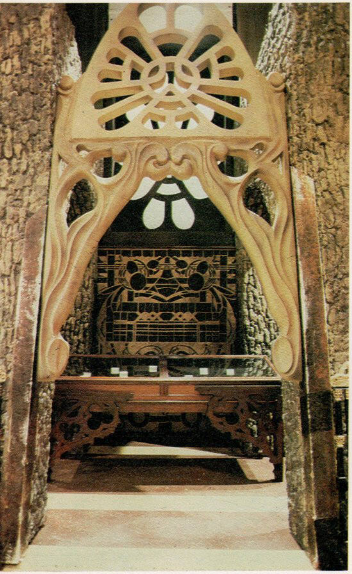


What next?

After the basic feel has been agreed on come the practical problems. How many sets will be used? Are there any moving elements? Does anything have to collapse? Open? Light up? Once the designer has these details in his mind he can start to commit his ideas to paper.

Large studio grid plans show exactly what space is available, and it is on these that the designer draws a plan of each set. The design is then produced as a 1:50 scale model, made of board, which is shown to the director. He has to ensure that his cameras – and the actors – can move around the set freely.

Practical problems have to be solved at this point. For example, in Warriors of the Deep a huge water tank had to appear, but there was no such facility at the studios, so part of the action had to be moved to Shepperton. It is the designer's job to sort out this type of problem.

It is also possible to change the script at this early stage in production. If the budget doesn't allow the building of the number of different sets called for in the script, the story may have to be rewritten to simplify the action.

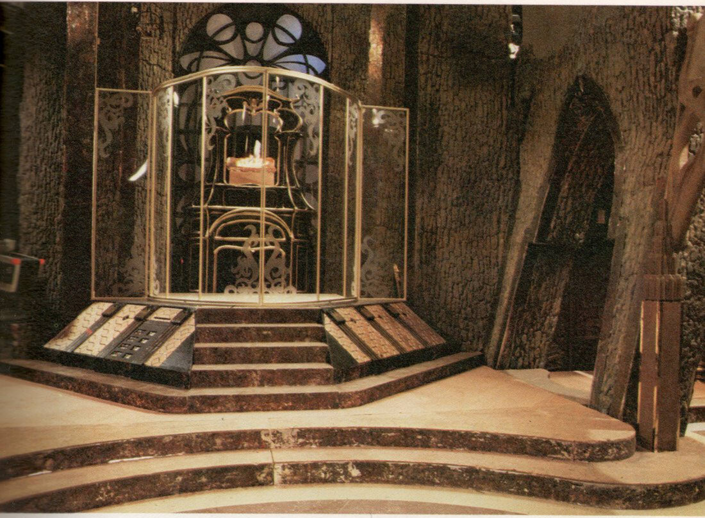
Is the set built next?

No, first the set has to be drawn in very great detail. This is where the artistic and architectural training that some of the designers have comes in useful, for the drawings are incredibly detailed, and must translate the scale model into plans for the builders.

This is a very painstaking stage in the design work, for the drawings must show the position of the sets, furniture and actors, as well as the construction of the sets. A scale of 1:20 is used for detail.

Costing is very important, for the budget must always be met. The designer has to decide what will be built, and with what materials, and if props will have to be borrowed or hired.

These architectural drawings will be used by the



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people who build the sets, of course, and by the director, who will oversee lighting, camerawork and rehearsals.

Are the sets built by the BBC?

No, most sets are built by outside contractors, who work from the detailed plans produced by the designer, and who liaise with him. Some sets are built in the BBC workshops, but not many. The sets have to be well made; doors must look solid enough to hold back a *Doctor Who* monster!

What about props?

The designer is responsible for all the props on the set. He may go to props houses to hire odds and ends, but some are specially made. Inventive, futuristic props are almost always specially made.

If the story is set in a definite period in history research will be needed. If the action takes place in an English country house in the 1920s, for example, all the props will have to be very accurate, so the designer will consult reference books and perhaps visit museums so that interiors can be recreated in the studio.

Where does it all come together?

In the studio. The set – which has been constructed by the contractor – is dismantled, transported, and re-assembled in the studio, and the props are added.

Does the designer's job end here?

No, he or she is always in the studio during filming, checking details and supervising carpenters and painters who may have to do last-minute jobs. The designer supervises the scene shifters, too.

This is a very busy time in the studio, with perhaps four or five cameras changing position, trailing wires, and overhead microphones etc. The designer pays great attention to the monitors around the studio, for he must ensure that what is shown on the screen looks just right. He must ignore the studio surroundings and look at the shots as the viewers at home see them.

When filming starts the designer is somewhat alone, for while most of the people in the studio are concerned with the action and the actors, the designer is concerned with the "look" of the set. He almost ignores the actors, looking behind them to ensure that the backgrounds are right. The designer is usually the first person in the studio – and the last to leave!

What happens when filming is completed?

The sets are broken up when filming is completed, though odd bits and pieces may be used again. The design department documents all episodes of a story on photographs so that they have an accurate

3

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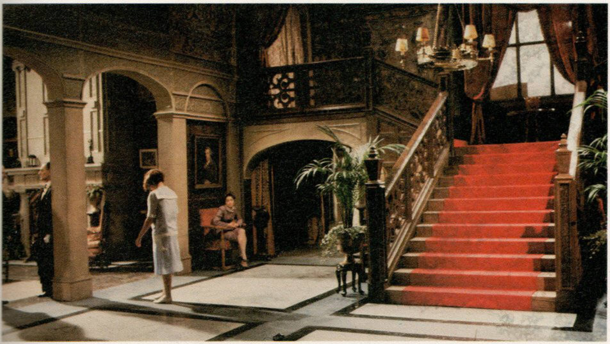
record, should sets need to be recreated in the future. For example, if the Gallifrey council chamber reappears in a future *Doctor Who* story, it will be made again from scratch, and the photographs and detailed drawings on file will ensure accuracy.

Keeping within the budget is important – working on programmes like *Doctor Who* is not like working on something like *Star Wars*, with a huge budget. This is why odd bits and pieces may be used again in a different guise. Objects that were one thing right-way-up can become something completely different painted and used upside-down! A column previously used in a Grace Kennedy singing show plus a bit from the *Blankety Blank* set might well find their way (heavily disguised) into a *Doctor Who* story. . . .

How long is the designer involved with a project?

This differs from programme to programme, but for a *Doctor Who* story the designer might start work in April, the recording will take place in June or July, and the programme will be broadcast the following January.



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How are BBC designers trained?

BBC designers come from a variety of backgrounds; they may have trained in fine art or architecture, theatre or interior design, and they start out as assistants, working with a designer, learning "on the job".

Pictures 1 and 2 show sets from ***The Keeper of Traken***; 3 and 4 ***Four to Doomsday***; 5 and 6 ***Black Orchid*** and 7 and 8 ***Warriors of the Deep***.

BBC copyright photographs

8

Day of the Dragon

Peri bent over the blackened figure.

"He's been burned to death!" she exclaimed. Then, as her eyes took in the surroundings, she turned to the Doctor in horror. "Colonel Latham's been burnt to a cinder, but nothing else around him has been touched! What on earth could have caused this?"

The Doctor surveyed the scene. It was true. If the body had not been there, the picturesque little Edwardian drawing room would have looked the picture of normality. But nothing could alter the fact that only seconds before, the Doctor and Peri had been talking to Colonel Latham in his drawing room and he had definitely not ventured out since.

On leaving the Colonel to go to the library, the Doctor and Peri had been stopped in their tracks by an anguished scream coming from the drawing room almost immediately after closing the door behind them. There was no time for anything to happen – but the sight before them proved otherwise.

Inspecting a velvet-covered armchair directly behind Colonel Latham's body, the Doctor said, half to himself, "S.H.C."

"What?" asked Peri, puzzled.

"Spontaneous Human Combustion," replied the Doctor flatly. "It's all to do with magnetic forces and chemicals in the human body."

Peri looked at him blankly, but before he could explain further, the door burst open, and Colonel Latham's butler, Harper, staggered in supporting an extremely hysterical maid. Her words were almost inaudible as she tried to speak between sobs and shrieks.

"Dragons!" she screamed. "Dragons in . . . in the cellar!" Harper was himself disturbed, and rather embarrassed, by the maid's behaviour.

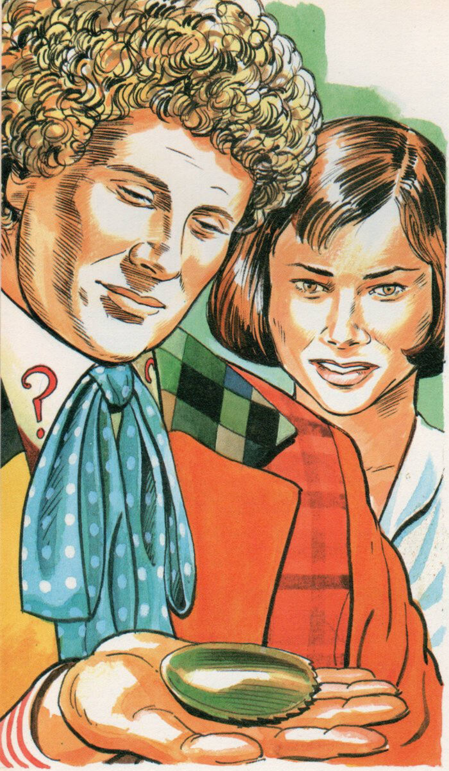
"I don't know about dragons, Sir," he said sheepishly. "But Sarah's been frightened by something, and it isn't the first time. Even so, I doubt that it's anything to worry . . . oh, my God!" he shouted, catching sight of Colonel Latham's burnt corpse.

Sarah screamed even more wildly, then mercifully fainted.

"You say it isn't the first time Sarah has been frightened by something?" The Doctor urged Harper to continue whilst helping him to settle Sarah on to the sofa.

Recovering his composure, Harper said, "Two days ago, she came upstairs from the cellar screaming that some monster was down there. We checked just to humour her, but there was no sign of anything, of course." He shot a nervous glance at Colonel Latham's body.

"Of course," said the Doctor. "Where does that door lead to?" he asked, pointing to a second door between a bookcase and a cabinet containing expensive glassware.



"To the cellar. Colonel Latham had it built so that he had easy access to his wine racks," said Harper. Then his eyes widened as a thought flashed into his mind. "Surely you're not saying that Sarah's 'dragon' came up from the cellar and killed the Colonel? That kind of thing only happens in bad horror films!"

"No, Harper," said the Doctor. "I'm sure you're quite right." Although he was smiling in amusement, the Doctor felt inwardly disturbed by a distant memory. "We may as well take a look all the same."

The three of them made their way down the stone steps which were in surprisingly good condition for such an old house. There was no need for candles or lamps; the cellar was wired up and had modern fluorescent light fittings. They were able to search every nook and cranny without fear of being spied upon by some unspeakable horror lurking in a dark corner.

Peri saw the Doctor frown and slip something into his jacket pocket that he had picked up from the shelf of one of the many wine racks, but all he said was, "Well, there are no dragons in this cellar!"

Back in the drawing room Harper was, understandably, very agitated.

"We should call the police and report Colonel Latham's death," he said.

"And tell them what? That he went up in a puff of smoke?" said the Doctor. "No, leave it a while. You take Sarah to her room; I want to do a little investigating before we go any further."

Reluctantly, Harper left them, taking Sarah with him.

"Well, what is it, Doctor?" Peri burst out, exasperated by his silence. "Tell me! I saw you putting something into your pocket!"

The Doctor gave a resigned sigh. "Well, I did find something resembling part of a scale, or what could be a scale. There isn't much of it," he said, taking a brown object with a serrated edge from his pocket.

"You mean there might be a dragon?" Peri stammered incredulously.

The Doctor gave her a faraway look. "Three centuries ago, I had the great displeasure to tangle with one of the most dangerous adversaries I have ever encountered. Qualar, the Grand Master of Fire. He was able to destroy anyone or anything with fire, without harming the surrounding area."

"How?" asked Peri, as the Doctor gazed into space.

"He was fire incarnate. He could take the form of a dragon . . . even of fire itself. He is truly a power to be reckoned with.

We couldn't destroy him, but we did make a bargain with him. In return for peace, we gave him the planet Zaron to create havoc in. Clearly, it wasn't enough."

"You think he might be responsible for all this?" asked Peri.

"It would appear so," said the Doctor. "The question is, why has he come all the way to Earth? Come on, Peri. Let's get back to the Tardis; I've a few details to check out."

They ran across the sprawling gardens and into a dense wood where the Tardis had materialised. Entering the wood, they both felt the rise in temperature, and exchanged worried glances. Without warning, a tree only a few yards in front of them was suddenly transformed into a pillar of flame.

"Aaah!" screamed Peri as she and the Doctor took cover hurriedly behind another tree.

"I know it's you, Qualar, there's no need for silly games!" shouted the Doctor.

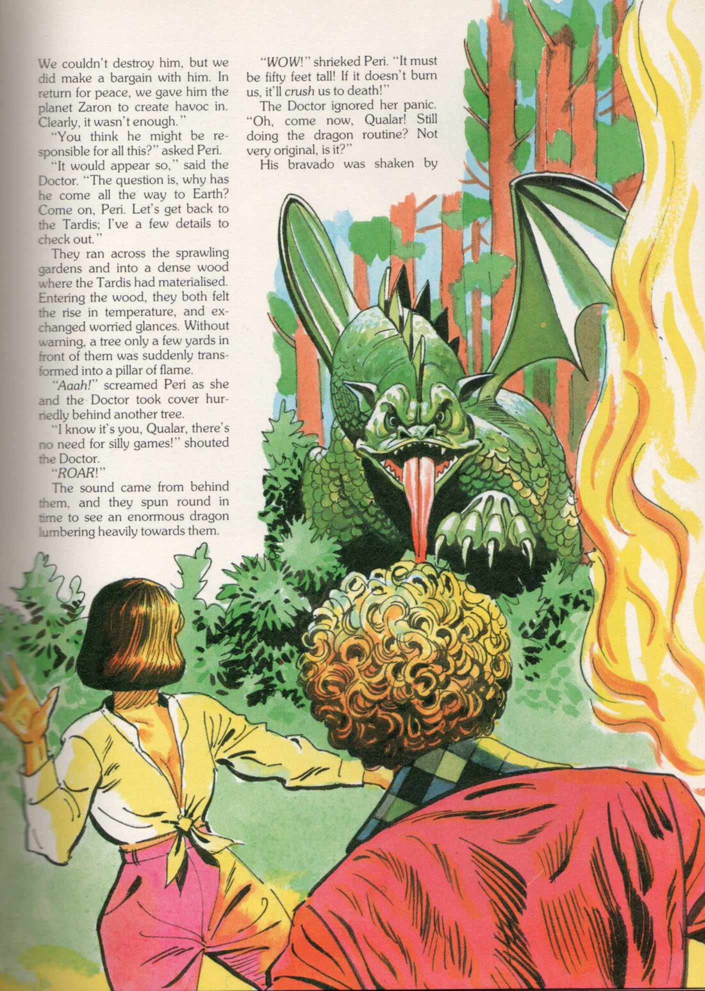
"*ROAR*!"

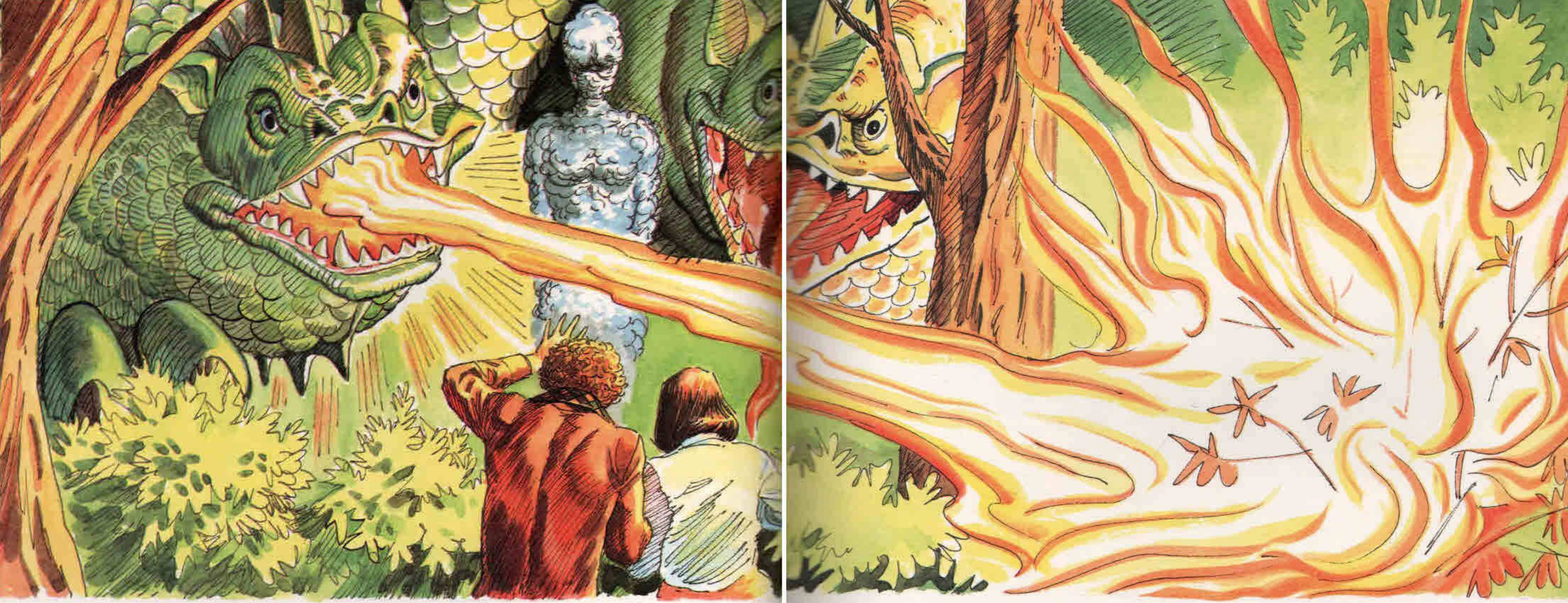
The sound came from behind them, and they spun round in time to see an enormous dragon lumbering heavily towards them.

"*WOW*!" shrieked Peri. "It must be fifty feet tall! If it doesn't burn us, it'll *crush* us to death!"

The Doctor ignored her panic. "Oh, come now, Qualar! Still doing the dragon routine? Not very original, is it?"

His bravado was shaken by





another "*ROAR!*" coming from their left. Turning again, they saw another dragon coming menacingly towards them . . . and another . . . and two to their right!

Trying to put on a show of bravery, the Doctor smiled and said, "Decided to start a family, Qualar? I didn't know you were the family type . . . *Aaagh!*" He fell to the ground in pain as a sheet of flame singed his arm through his clothes, *without* burning them.

"Doctor!" cried Peri.

The first dragon began to change its form, and in a few moments, in its place stood the true form of . . . Qualar. He was a grotesque figure, and Peri cringed at the sight of him. He was a seven-foot-high mass of pulsating grey matter, with a kind of black aura around him. It was hard to imagine that he could change form so easily.

"So I haven't been forgotten," his voice thundered, seeming to reverberate around the wood.

"Why are you here?" spat the Doctor through teeth gritted in pain and anger.

"The planet Earth holds a mine of treasures for me," said Qualar in a calmer tone. "Its inhabitants have secrets that I will find most useful." Then, rounding on them in a sudden flash of anger, he said, "You tricked me, Doctor! You gave me a dead world! Nothing lives – nothing can be controlled on Zaron! You *tricked* me!"

"If nothing lives on Zaron, it's because of your destructive ways, Qualar!" cried the Doctor impatiently. "Now you're searching for more victims . . . am I right?"

The other dragons became agitated and one threw a deadly flame, which consumed a nearby bush.

"You're no match for this planet!" bluffed Peri, fury lending courage to her heart.

"We shall see!" roared Qualar, and he began to disappear in front of their eyes, along with his deadly companions.

"He does disappearing tricks too?" said Peri, thoroughly relieved that they had been left unharmed.

"Mmh, apparently. It must be something new he's picked up, which would also explain how he got to Colonel Latham without being seen," replied the Doctor, not feeling quite as confident as Peri that they had escaped Qualar's villainy. Warily, he looked round the wood.

"Let's make for the Tardis," he urged, helping Peri to her feet. "We won't be safe until we're inside."

When they reached the Tardis, the sight that greeted them wiped away Peri's premature feelings of relief. The Tardis was surrounded by flames.

A disembodied voice shook them.

"Don't think about leaving, Doctor! I mean to keep you here until I've done with you, so don't try to outwit me like the Colonel did. Look what happened to him!"

"Why did you kill Colonel Latham?" asked the Doctor.

"He was a danger to me, but I'm on my guard now!" Qualar's formidable voice croaked teasingly.

"Quick! Back to the house!" the Doctor shouted to Peri, and the two of them raced back to the comparative safety of the big, old mansion.

"Run, Doctor!" boomed Qualar. "I don't want you yet . . . but when I do, there'll be nowhere to hide!"

Back at the house, the Doctor rummaged through Colonel Latham's files while Peri paced up and down.

"I can't believe there's no way of immobilising Qualar, Doctor," she said. "Even if we can't destroy him, surely we can put him out of action!"

"Back on planet Zaron, he *was* indestructible because it was *his* territory, and he was in complete control," said the Doctor. "He's at a disadvantage here because the Earth's technology is far more advanced than Zaron's, and Qualar is not yet familiar with it – that was clear from what he said. He also let slip another snippet of information."

"Oh?" queried Peri.

"Mmh, he said Colonel Latham was dangerous to him. *Nobody* is dangerous to Qualar *unless* they know a way to destroy him," said the Doctor with a satisfied grin. "Help me look through these files, Peri. The key to our goal must be in one of them!"

There was a scuffling noise behind them and they turned to see Harper staggering into the room with one arm badly burnt.

"Doctor!" he cried. "There's a fire-breathing monster coming this way. He's burning everything in his path!"

"Oh, tut, tut," said the Doctor casually, shaking his head. "That won't do the garden much good!"

Peri and Harper stared at him in utter disbelief. Had he gone mad? "Well, what are we standing here for – we've got to get out of here!" shouted Peri.

"Not just yet," said the Doctor.

"Are you serious?" cried Peri. "There's a flame-throwing monster on its way to turn us into well-done steaks, and you don't seem to be bothered!"

"Well, we can't leave until we've carried out our plan," replied the Doctor.

"What plan?" asked Harper.

"To exterminate Qualar," said the Doctor simply. "What else?"

"But we didn't find it, Doctor!" shouted Peri. "I'm all for standing my ground and fighting when there's a chance of survival, but we don't have that chance against Qualar!"

"I think a visit to Colonel Latham's laboratory is called for," said the Doctor. "I'm rather fond of chemistry."

"This isn't quite the time to be indulging in fanciful whims!" said Peri. "What are you up to?"

"You'll see," said the Doctor, leading them to the laboratory.

A strong smell of burning wafted over to them, together with a variety of bangs and crashes, warning them that Qualar would soon be with them, and was leaving a blazing trail of wanton destruction behind him as he went along.

"Quickly! Turn all the gas taps on!" ordered the Doctor when they reached the laboratory.

Peri and Harper looked in horror at him.

"Are you trying to kill us all?" cried Harper.

"Just the opposite!" shouted the Doctor as he lunged at a gas tap near a work bench. "Get on with it . . . we'll have to be well clear of the place before Qualar gets here! Peri, bring Sarah, too!"

They sped round the laboratory turning all the gas taps on, and with the last one turned full on, the Doctor shouted, "Run for it! When Qualar's flames hit this place, the explosion will be heard as far away as Gallifrey!"

They tore out of the house and, with their lungs at bursting point, made for the woods and the safety of the Tardis.

Allowing themselves a split second to quickly glance over their shoulders, they caught sight of Qualar only yards from the house. Soon it would be over, but by then the Doctor and his friends would be hurtling away from the Earth.

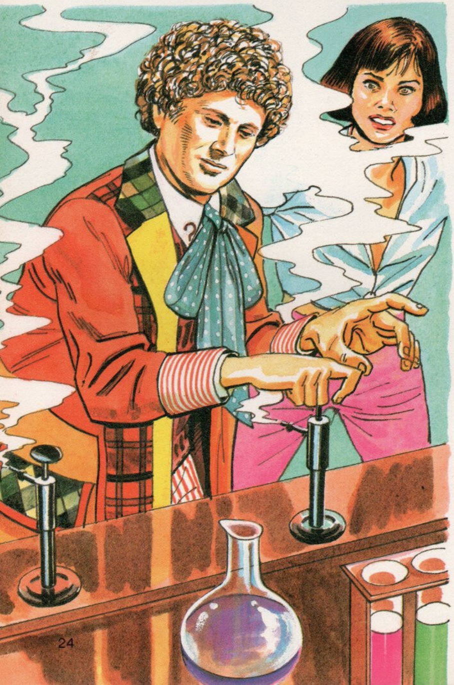
"Well, I think we've had enough adventure for one day," said the Doctor, activating the controls. "You'll have to come with us I'm afraid, Harper. You too, Sarah. But we'll drop you back here when it's safe."

"If the Tardis can find its way back here!" laughed Peri, knowing the Tardis's reputation of not always landing where it's supposed to.

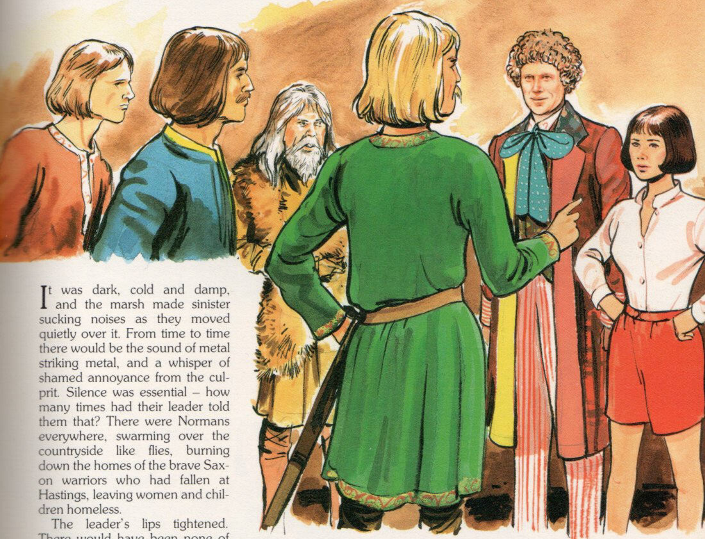
"Let's see what's happened to Qualar," said the Doctor, switching on the screen monitor.

The chaos shown there told them everything. The second Qualar's flames had made contact with the gas and chemicals, an almighty explosion had ripped the house apart, taking most of the surrounding areas with it. Qualar and his companions were no more.

"Well, that seems to be the end of that," said the Doctor, dusting himself down. "I feel rather hungry all of a sudden. Anyone fancy a nice, juicy steak . . . well done, of course!"



THE REAL HEREWARD



It was dark, cold and damp, and the marsh made sinister sucking noises as they moved quietly over it. From time to time there would be the sound of metal striking metal, and a whisper of shamed annoyance from the culprit. Silence was essential – how many times had their leader told them that? There were Normans everywhere, swarming over the countryside like flies, burning down the homes of the brave Saxon warriors who had fallen at Hastings, leaving women and children homeless.

The leader's lips tightened. There would have been none of this if things had gone differently. If the army had not succumbed to that fatal temptation to chase the apparently fleeing Normans who had then turned and hacked them to pieces, England would still be free of the iron fist of William, the Norman duke.

But – there was no point in wishing now. What was done was done.

There was a light up ahead – it must be the cottage they had been told about. He turned to the men creeping along behind him, and indicated it with a sweep of his powerful arm designed yet again to remind them of the need for silence. The cottage looked peaceful enough – but you could never be sure if it hid a bevy of armed Normans or not.

He raised his cupped hands to his mouth and made the cry of an owl into the darkness. After a moment it was returned – all was quiet. The men moved stealthily to the cottage, and were met by the old man who lived there – a man whom, they knew, they could trust with their lives.

Inside the cottage it was dim and musty-smelling. The leader of the men sat wearily on the floor with a cup of spiced ale, staring in to the fire. Then by its light he saw two figures in the far corner, staring at him with wide eyes. He sprang to his feet.

"Who's this?" he demanded, while his men turned swiftly to stare at the strangers.

"One calls himself a doctor," said the old man. "The other is some sort of companion to him – maybe an apprentice, I don't know. They sound like a couple of half-wits to me – the girl kept muttering about some sort of transport they had."

"Half-wit, indeed!" said the girl indignantly, but the Saxon leader held up a strong hand for silence.

"Where do you come from?"

he asked. "You are dressed strangely, and where is this transport of yours that was spoken of?"

"I am a traveller, known as the Doctor," said the man. "This is my assistant, Peri. Our vehicle – well, it has no real claim to that word – is lost somewhere in this marsh. Or rather – we are lost. We came to this cottage seeking help."

The tall Saxon looked hard at them for a long moment, then nodded sternly. "I am prepared to believe you," he said. "Think yourselves fortunate – if I did not, these men would have slit your throats by now."

The Doctor and Peri exchanged nervous glances.

"Now," said the Saxon briskly. "Food and a good night's rest, old man, and we'll leave you in peace. We're peaceful Saxons – not the murdering savages the Normans call us."

The old man nodded. "Aye, and welcome to stay here for ever, if it would please you," he said, and smiled. "It's not often that –"

"Come, come," broke in one of the Saxons. "We're starving here! Bread and cheese, old man! Quickly!"

They began to eat while the Doctor and Peri consulted in whispers.

"Who are they? Do you really believe they're peaceful?"

The Doctor shrugged. "Whether I do or not, it's better not to accuse them point blank of lying. They're Saxon outlaws, by the sound of it, keeping out of sight of the Normans, which is wise. I wonder . . ."

"What?"

"Whether this is in fact the legendary Hereward the Wake."

"Hereward the who?"

"The Wake. I forgot, you're American. Hereward the Wake was the foremost of the Saxon outlaws who led a guerilla campaign against the Normans after the battle of Hastings. He tended to concentrate on the fen country, where we are now."

"Did he win?" asked Peri.

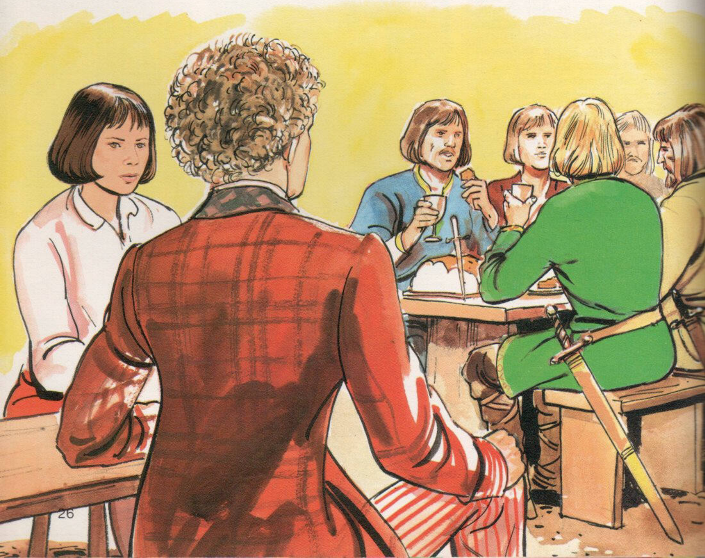
"Don't be silly," the Doctor said acidly. "How could he have won with the Normans safely on the throne for the next dozen or so generations? No, after a while he just vanished into the mist, never to be seen again. They still think he's alive in some parts of twentieth century England, you know."

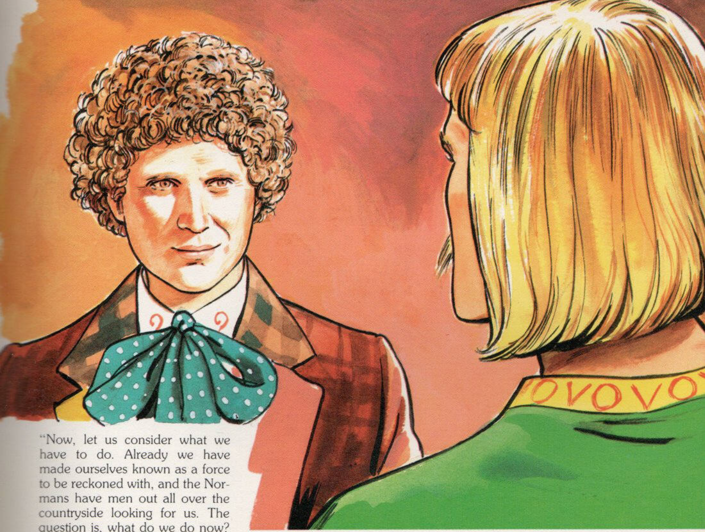
"You're joking!"

The Doctor shook his head.

"Quiet," growled the Saxon leader, glancing over at them. "We have much to discuss, and I for one will not be interrupted by a pair of whispering fools."

He turned back to his men.





"Now, let us consider what we have to do. Already we have made ourselves known as a force to be reckoned with, and the Normans have men out all over the countryside looking for us. The question is, what do we do now? Do we carry on lying low here in the fens, or do we agree to an alliance with the Danes, as they wish, and march on London?"

"On London, my lord?"

The Saxon leader smiled grimly. "I have told you all before about using that expression. I am not your lord. Yes, on London. This is what the Danes suggest."

"Stupidly," put in the Doctor, dryly.

The Saxon swung round. "You spoke?"

The Doctor got to his feet. "Yes, I said that it was a stupid suggestion. The countryside from here to the Kent coast will be swarming with Normans. You'd all be cut to pieces. And even if you weren't, do you think the Danes would allow you to take control of the country if you should defeat the Normans? They've ruled here once – they will not stand idly by and watch a Saxon outlaw take the crown."

"And why not?" broke in one of the Saxons angrily. "They are not the only ones to have ruled here! Why, King Harold can claim their allegiance anyway, through his mother, King Cnut's sister. Is that not so, my lord?"

There was a long moment of absolute silence, while the Saxon who had spoken clapped his fists to his face as if trying to push the fatal words back into his mouth.

Then the Doctor spoke.

"But Harold was killed at Hastings," he said slowly. "At least, that was the word the Normans sent round. The body was identified."

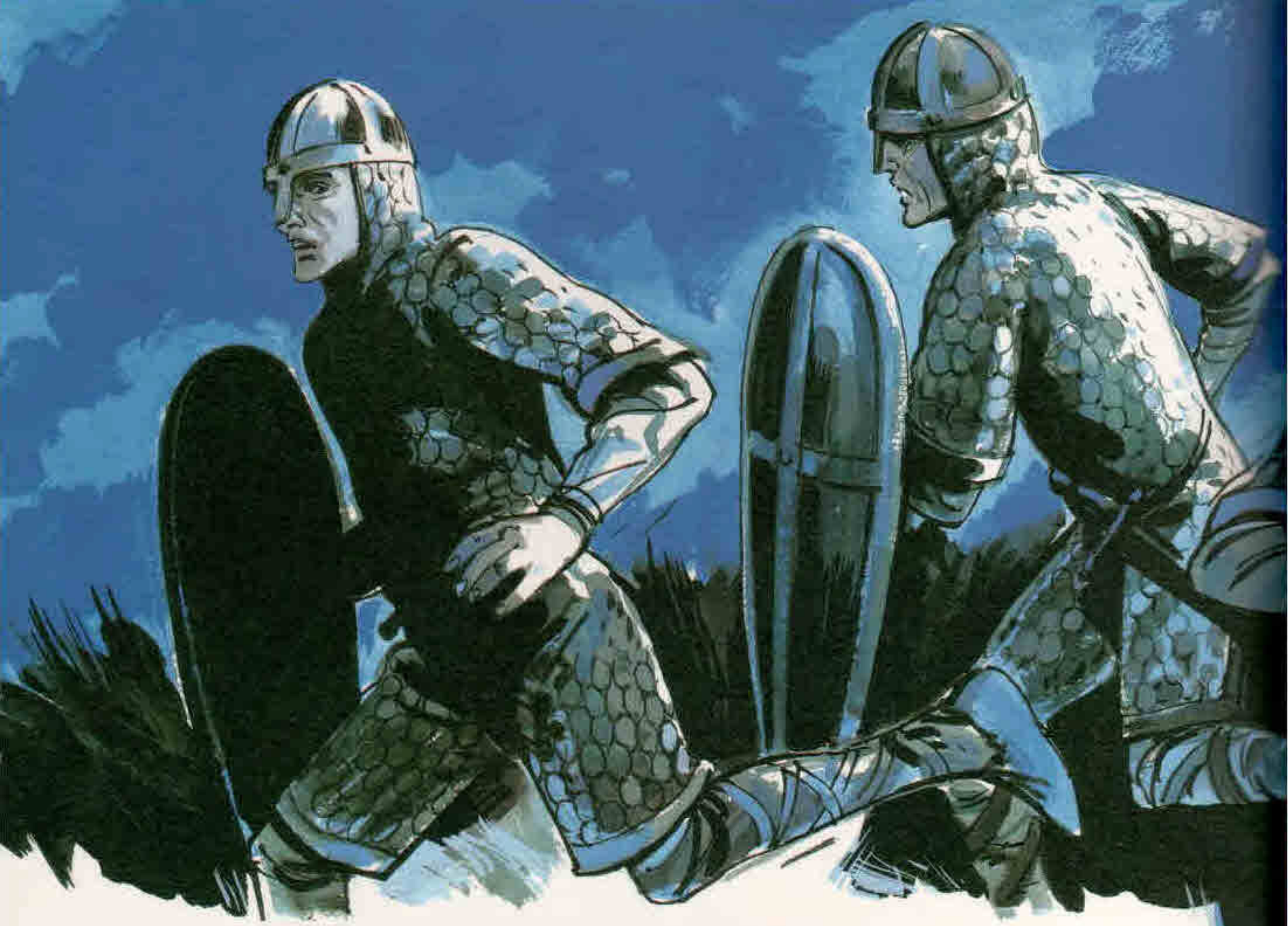
The tall Saxon turned back to the Doctor. "Identified by the Countess Gytha," he said, and smiled. "And the Lady Edith, known as the Swan-Neck. Both of whom knew the king very well, one his mother, the other the mother of his children. Who better to identify him? But do you think for one moment that they would fail to do as he asked?"

"You mean – they *knew* that you were alive? Even while they looked at the body of some unknown Saxon soldier and wept over it as yours?"

King Harold smiled. "Why not? Does it harm anyone? The Norman duke believes that I am dead – let him! He fears me, though, as Hereward the Wake – he knows that I can cause him great trouble, that so long as the people of England know that Hereward is alive, they will never totally accept the Normans as their overlords."

There was a pause.

"So you're King Harold?" said Peri at last. "I never thought I'd



ever get to see someone like you as long as I lived!"

Harold smiled. "I hope I am not too much of a disappointment to you," he said flatly. "Meanwhile, this is getting us nowhere. We have still to decide upon a course of action."

"My lord, about this march on London . . ."

"Hush!" interrupted the Doctor suddenly. Silence fell as though someone had dropped a black cloth over a bird's cage, and ears were strained for the slightest sound.

Peri, listening as eagerly as the Saxons, heard nothing at first. Then, quite close to the cottage, there was the sound of footsteps creeping slowly over the damp ground, and of breathing – a man's breathing, and a muttered French oath.

Slowly, very slowly, King Harold drew his sword. It glinted in the dim firelight. As if they were actors following a cue, the rest of the Saxons followed suit – but the Doctor forestalled them. Laying his hand softly on the king's arm, he shook his head, and groped in his pocket for something. Peri frowned. What could he possibly have that would be more use than those vicious-looking swords?

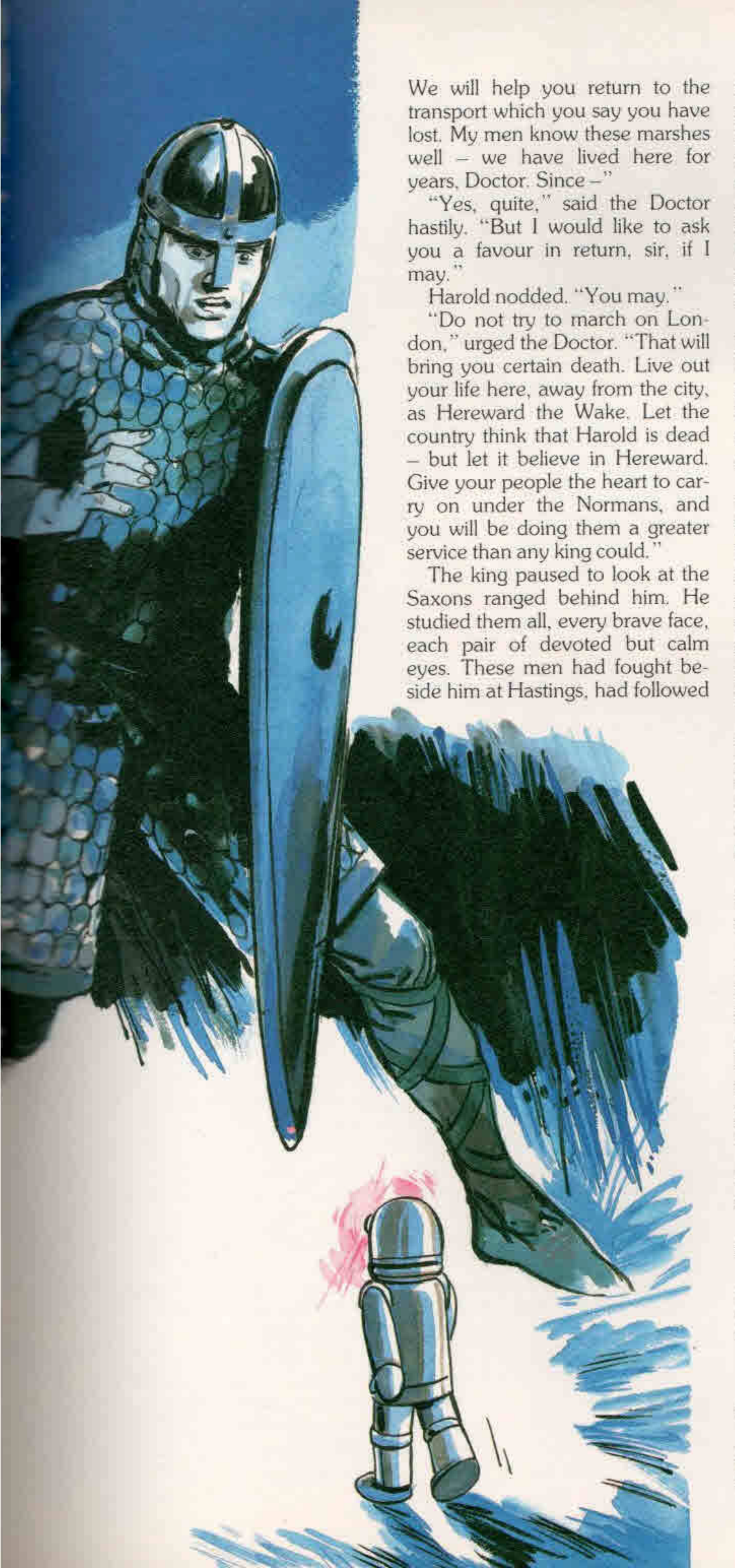
The Doctor drew something out of his pocket, and Peri almost laughed aloud as she saw what it was – one of those battery-driven robots that were so popular with children in her own time. When you pushed the button, its eyes flashed and rolled, it began to walk stiffly forward and spoke in a guttural, stilted, mechanised American accent. The Saxons had drawn back at the sight of it, but were reassured when the Doctor, making violent gestures, demonstrated that it would not be used against them. Then, creeping towards the door of the cottage, he pulled it silently open, placed the robot on the damp ground, and pushed its button.

The Normans outside heard nothing at first. Suspicious of the cottage in the marshes for no reason other than boredom at their posts, they were nevertheless sniffing round it like dogs. The cottage was small, and so it was not long before they reached the door again. There were eight of them, brave men – but . . .

There was a terrified scream, then another, and a third and the sound of running footsteps growing fainter in the distance, while outside a metallic voice was saying repeatedly.: *"I am Martin, the Metal Marvel. I can do all sorts of things. I am pleased that we are friends. I am Martin . . ."*

"They have gone," said the Doctor, peering outside, grabbing the robot and shaking it into submission.

The king smiled. "We thank you for that," he said. "We would never have heard them approaching and would have been dead in our blood by now.



We will help you return to the transport which you say you have lost. My men know these marshes well – we have lived here for years, Doctor. Since –"

"Yes, quite," said the Doctor hastily. "But I would like to ask you a favour in return, sir, if I may."

Harold nodded. "You may."

"Do not try to march on London," urged the Doctor. "That will bring you certain death. Live out your life here, away from the city, as Hereward the Wake. Let the country think that Harold is dead – but let it believe in Hereward. Give your people the heart to carry on under the Normans, and you will be doing them a greater service than any king could."

The king paused to look at the Saxons ranged behind him. He studied them all, every brave face, each pair of devoted but calm eyes. These men had fought beside him at Hastings, had followed him unquestioningly into danger after danger. A few of them, he knew, had determined upon his overthrowing the Norman duke and returning to the throne; their sole aim for the past – how many years was it exactly? – had been to reinstate him as king of the English. Was he now to throw aside their hopes, their wishes?

"What say you, my companions?" he asked. "Do we attempt London, and die? Or stay here, and by doing so, create such trouble as will make the Norman upstart tremble in his shoes? Come, your answer."

There was a moment's silence. Then one of the Saxons stepped forward. "My lord, it is my opinion that we can do no better than stay here in the fens. That way, we ensure that the Saxons still have something to believe in, despite all; you remain safe – and we show that Norman that the English are never beaten!"

"Aye, aye, my lord!" The Saxons nodded their approval of this decision, and the king looked at them with affection. He should have known that they would give the right answer to his question. He turned to the Doctor.

"Very well," he said. "We stay here. Now, where is your means of transport?"

"My lord king," broke in the Doctor, "today you have proved yourself more than ten times a better man than the King Harold who died at Hastings. It's getting light – I think my companion and I can find our way back to our – vehicle. Farewell – Hereward the Wake!"

The king laughed. "Farewell, Doctor. You too, Peri. May you meet no more Normans."

"Oh, I think we can be sure of that," said Peri.

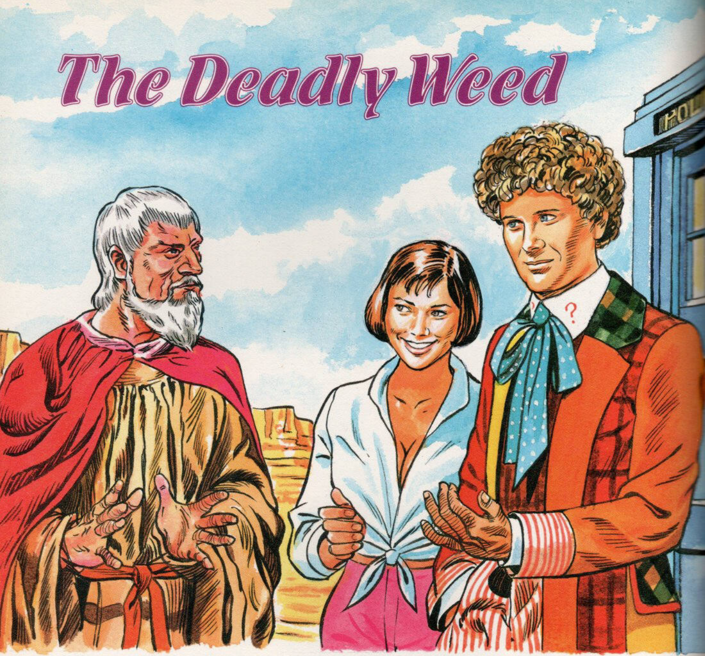
As they walked back to the Tardis through the early morning sunlight, she became puzzled. "Doctor."

"Mmmm?"

"Why *did* you have a toy robot in your pocket?"

The Doctor turned and stared at her. "My dear girl! What do *you* keep in *your* pockets?"

The Deadly Weed



"Welcome, Doctor!" Vama, a Time Lord of considerable age, held his hands out to greet the Doctor, delighted at meeting his friend again. "I'm glad the Tardis managed to reach its programmed destination for once . . . I wasn't at all sure you'd get here!" His old face creased into a smile, and his eyes shone brightly.

Peri was quite taken with him; he seemed to her to be old, yet at the same time, ageless.

"It's so good to see you again, Vama." The Doctor returned the warm greeting. "Yes, the Tardis excelled itself this time."

"I'm afraid I have some business to attend to . . . you know, pacifying a few Dalons, and sorting out the planets Rexac and Excalon . . . did you know they're at war again? Anyway," continued Vama, not waiting for a reply, "I'll just finish it off and then I'll be free to entertain you. In the meantime, you know your way round – perhaps you can show Peri some of the sights of our little planet?"

"Of course," agreed the Doctor. "Peri, have you ever seen a purple lake that bubbles like the hot springs of the Earth?"

"No," said Peri. "I can't say that I have . . . but I'd like to!"

"Well, come this way," said the Doctor, grinning and leading her away.

Peri was spellbound by the purple lake. She had been curious to see it, but the reality took her breath away.

"It's beautiful, Doctor," she gasped. "I must confess I was expecting it to be just like a lake on Earth, but with purple water. I didn't expect it to be so . . . well . . . tranquil. It's lovely!"

"Mmh," muttered the Doctor, noticing some dirty, black weeds washed up on the shore. "It seems to be getting a little messy now though. Pity."

"Tell me about Vama, Doctor," said Peri eagerly. "He's a Time Lord like you, and yet he isn't like you."

"No," replied the Doctor. "He gave himself the job of overseeing this solar system, Lagon 2. That's his sole purpose . . . and a demanding one. It takes a special kind of skill and dedication to do it, and Vama fills those requirements."

"How old is he?" asked Peri watching a small creature crawl up to the weed by the lake and nibble at it.

"Oh, it's hard to say," said the Doctor, trying to think. "A good few of your centuries at least."

Peri was still watching the little creature by the weed. Having had a nibble, it began to quiver quite violently before falling on its side; then it was still.

"Doctor, is that weed poisonous?" she asked.

"I've never seen that type of weed before," replied the Doctor, taking a close look at it. "I don't really know."

"Well, look what's happened to that little animal," said Peri, pointing to where it lay.

They went to examine it. It was not only dead, but was beginning to change colour from its natural blue colour, to a metallic bronze.

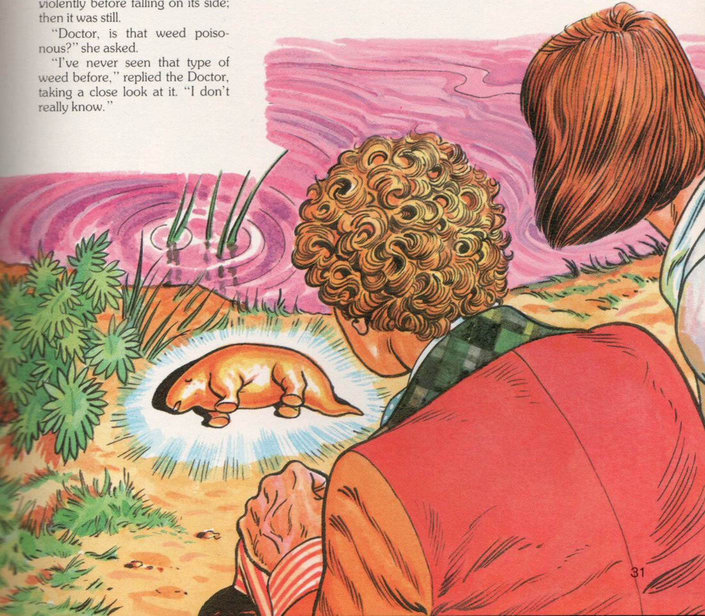
"How odd," remarked the Doctor. "That's the first time I've known anything like this to happen. I must mention it to Vama."

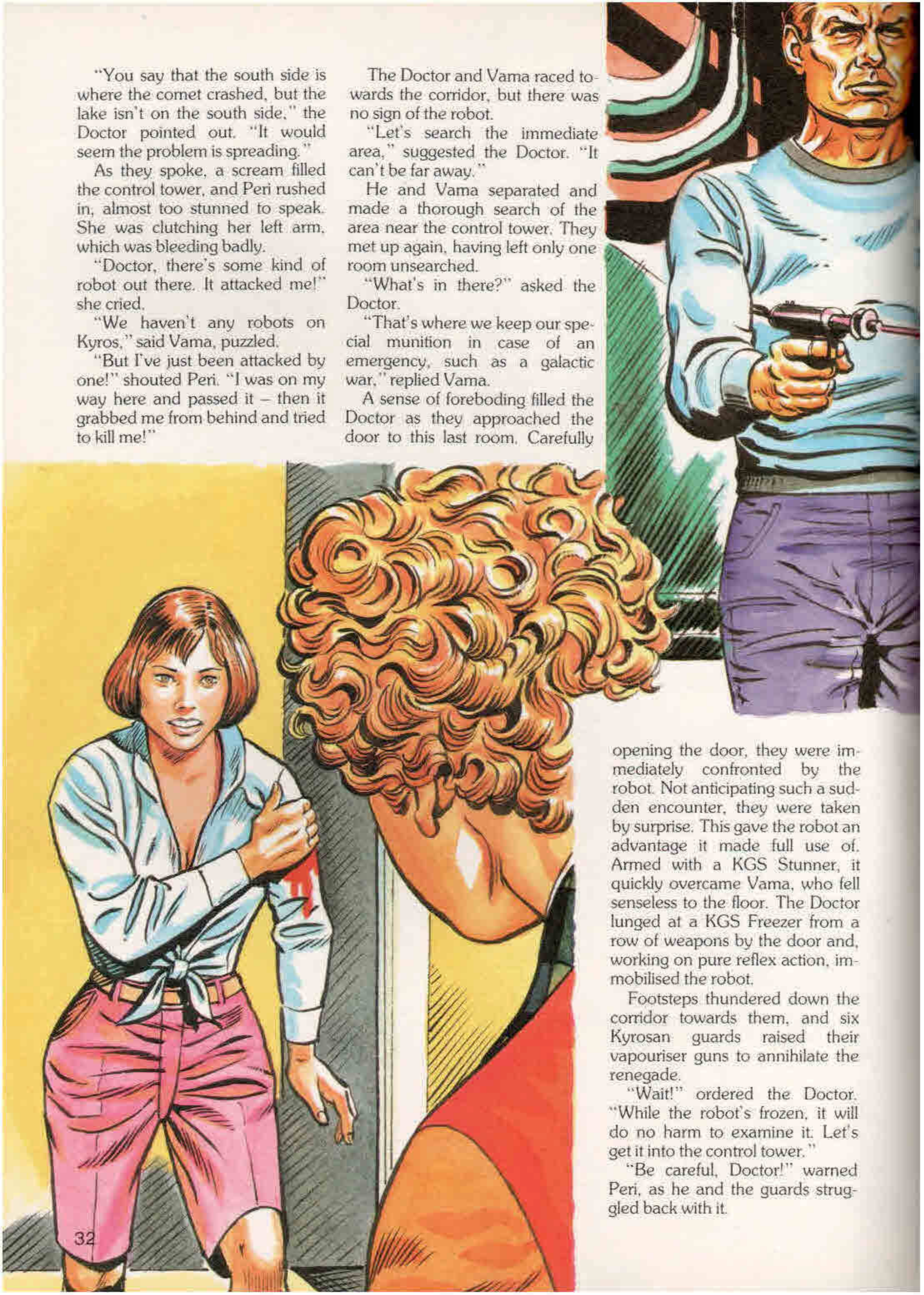
Meeting Vama in his dome-shaped control tower, the Doctor mentioned the strange phenomenon. Vama's face clouded, and he recounted the unusual events that had recently occurred on his planet.

"A very small comet crashed into the south side of Kyros a short time ago. Not much damage was done and after the initial clearing up of debris and necessary repairs were done, nothing more happened. However, not long afterwards, a delegation of excavation experts were sent to the site. One of them returned in a state similar to your description of the creature by the lake. He was convulsing and died very quickly . . . but not before he too had turned a bronze colour. It was mystifying, to say the least."

"Indeed," remarked the Doctor. "That's the oddest part."

"The others were never seen again," Vama carried on. "An investigation party was sent over to the site, but nothing was found. The tragedy has remained a mystery ever since."





"You say that the south side is where the comet crashed, but the lake isn't on the south side," the Doctor pointed out. "It would seem the problem is spreading."

As they spoke, a scream filled the control tower, and Peri rushed in, almost too stunned to speak. She was clutching her left arm, which was bleeding badly.

"Doctor, there's some kind of robot out there. It attacked me!" she cried.

"We haven't any robots on Kyros," said Vama, puzzled.

"But I've just been attacked by one!" shouted Peri. "I was on my way here and passed it – then it grabbed me from behind and tried to kill me!"

The Doctor and Vama raced towards the corridor, but there was no sign of the robot.

"Let's search the immediate area," suggested the Doctor. "It can't be far away."

He and Vama separated and made a thorough search of the area near the control tower. They met up again, having left only one room unsearched.

"What's in there?" asked the Doctor.

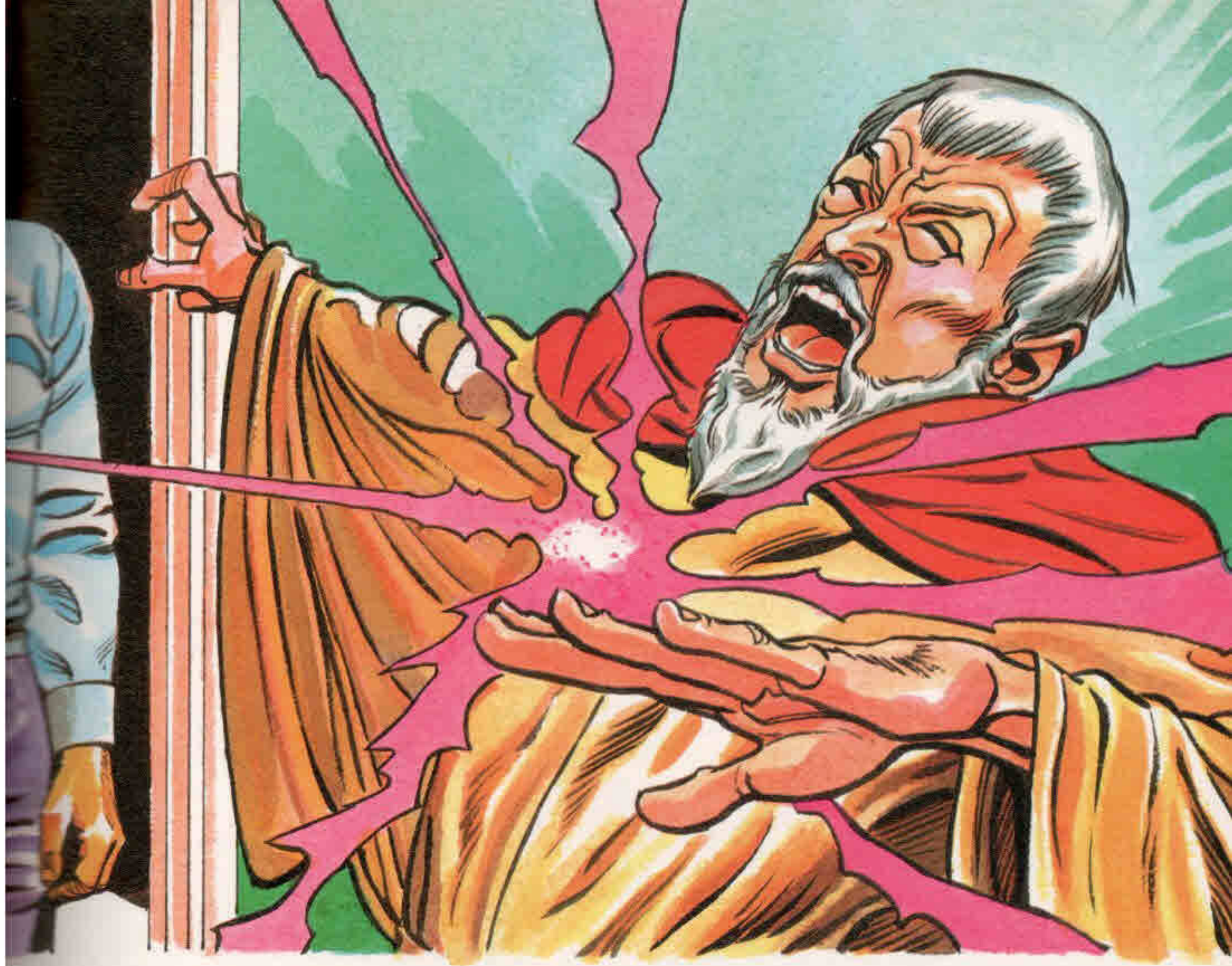
"That's where we keep our special munition in case of an emergency, such as a galactic war," replied Vama.

A sense of foreboding filled the Doctor as they approached the door to this last room. Carefully opening the door, they were immediately confronted by the robot. Not anticipating such a sudden encounter, they were taken by surprise. This gave the robot an advantage it made full use of. Armed with a KGS Stunner, it quickly overcame Vama, who fell senseless to the floor. The Doctor lunged at a KGS Freezer from a row of weapons by the door and, working on pure reflex action, immobilised the robot.

Footsteps thundered down the corridor towards them, and six Kyrosan guards raised their vapouriser guns to annihilate the renegade.

"Wait!" ordered the Doctor. "While the robot's frozen, it will do no harm to examine it. Let's get it into the control tower."

"Be careful, Doctor!" warned Peri, as he and the guards struggled back with it.



"It can't harm anyone now," said the Doctor. "It'll be under the effect of the Freezer for a good hour at least."

Peri shot a worried glance at Vama. Intercepting it, the Doctor reassured her. "He'll be OK. For some reason the robot was only armed with a Stunner . . . luckily for us."

Conscious of sounds and movements filtering through to his mind, Vama gradually came to. As his eyes fell on the robot, he cried, "Neltar!"

The Doctor and Peri spun round in shocked surprise at his cry.

"It didn't register before in the confusion, but that's the excavator who returned from the crash area!"

"The one who died?" asked Peri in amazement.

Vama nodded. "The very same."

The Doctor's mind was ticking over. If Neltar had been so horrifically transformed, so would the rest of the excavation team . . . and goodness knows where they were at that moment.

"If the weed is spreading, the consequences will be disastrous," he said. "We'll have to stop it before Kyros is turned into a planet of robots."

"That's an understatement!" cried Peri. "But how? We don't even know who's doing this, or why."

"I don't think anyone is doing anything," replied the Doctor. "I would say that the reason for all this lies with the comet. It must have carried that weed from . . . yes, from Jerimi. The Tardis took me there once by accident, of course! It's inhabited entirely by robots who reproduce by a deadly weed that attacks other living creatures and changes them into robots like themselves."

"This is a nightmare!" gasped Vama. "I'll arrange for a thorough search for the weed. We'll destroy it with explosives!"

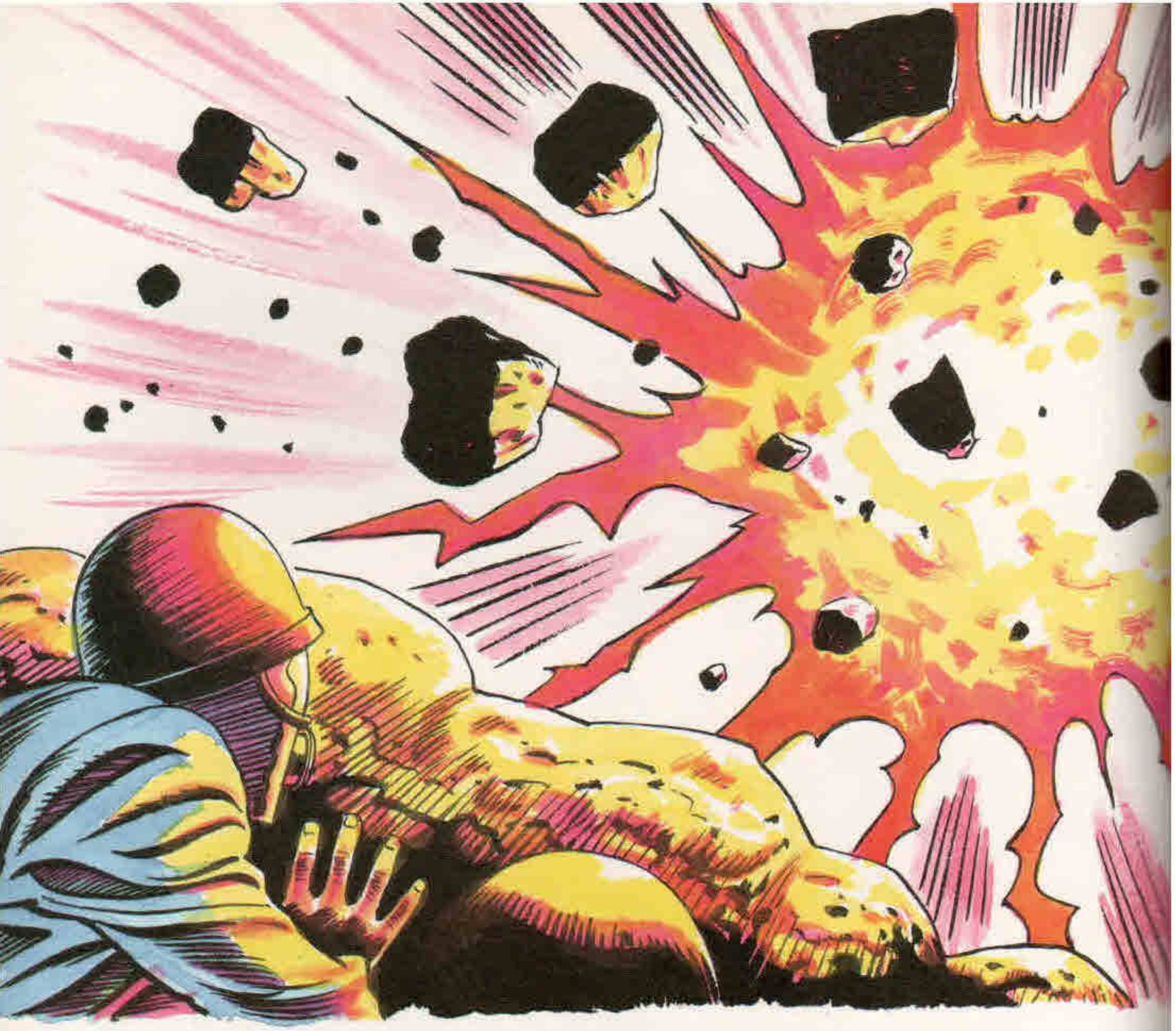
"You can't cover the entire planet," said the Doctor. "The weed could have spread anywhere . . . everywhere!"

"AAAAGH!" Another scream from outside startled them.

A Kyrosan guard ran in to them. "Vama, an army of . . . of . . . well, robots seems to be advancing on us! They're destroying everything!"

"We must get to the site where the comet crashed!" shouted the Doctor. "That's the heart of the problem. If we can destroy that, we might have a chance of stopping this!"

"Deltar!" Vama addressed the leader of his Imperial Guards. "Get the Imperial Guards together. You know what



weapons are needed for such a task as this."

Deltar raced out to carry out his orders.

Armed with vapourisers, the Doctor, Peri, Vama and the Imperial Guards dodged the murderous robots, exterminating as many as they could with their lethal weapons.

The circuits of one robot shorted causing it to explode, sending particles everywhere. That created a fresh nightmare. As the particles hit the guards, the weed that was attached attacked them. Before everyone's eyes, the unfortunate guards became robots, joining the ranks of their adversaries. The process was horrendous to watch.

"We won't make it!" cried Peri, one terrified eye on the legions of robots that advanced ominously and the other eye on the guards who were dropping, and changing form, all around them.

The Doctor was too engrossed in despatching yet another robot to hear her.

Reaching the crash site, after what seemed to be an eternity, and with their troops cut by half, Vama gave his orders. "Set the explosives around the crater!" he shouted.

Deltar hurriedly sent a select team to carry out that task, while the remainder of the war-torn, vastly diminished army did their best to ward off the attacks of their enemies.

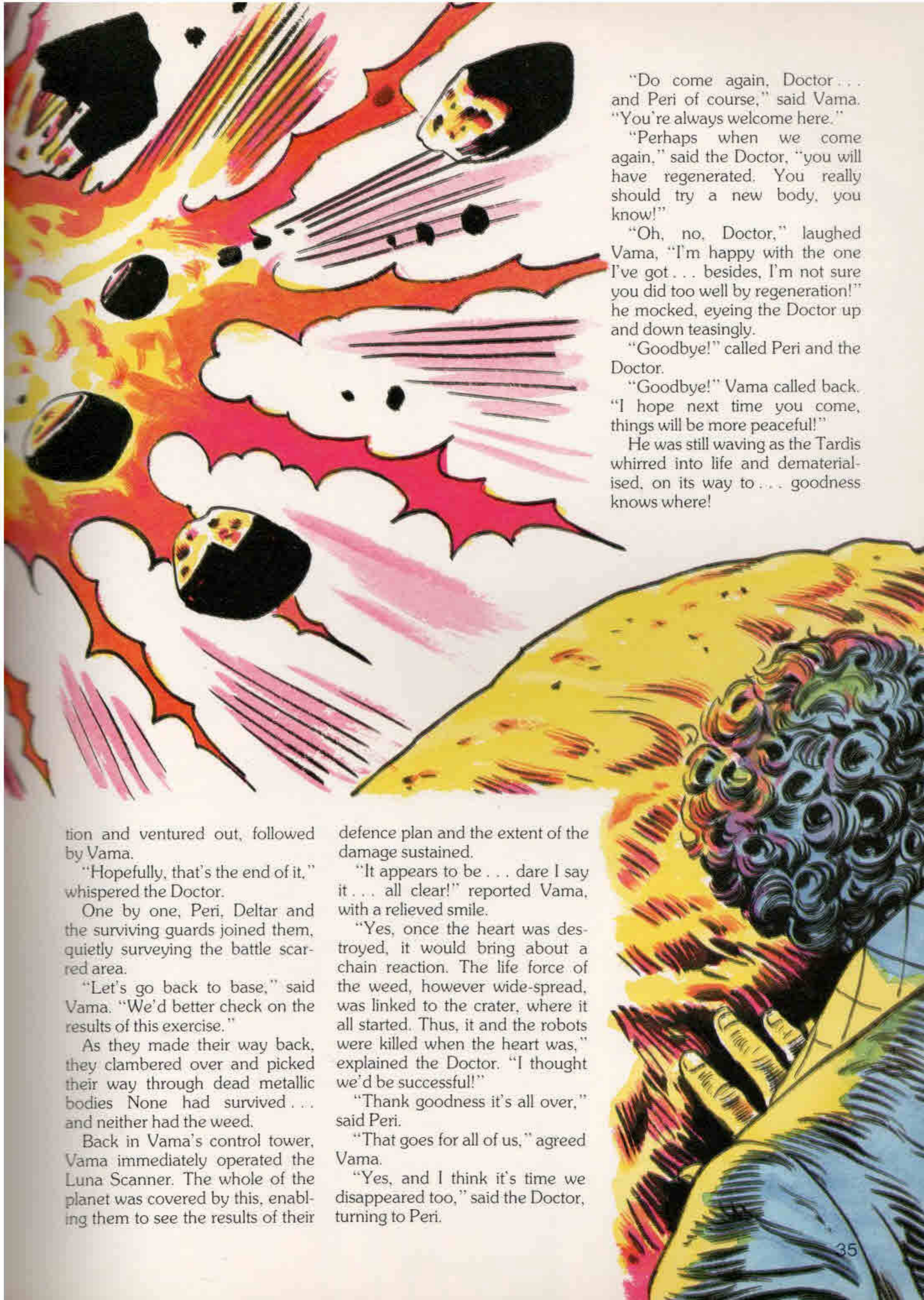
"Are you sure this will work?" Peri shouted.

"We've a good chance," the Doctor assured her, but she remained unconvinced.

"Right, everybody take cover!" ordered Vama as the last of the explosives was in place.

The almighty explosion tore through the atmosphere, shaking the ground under them. A blue flash lit the sky and debris hurtled through the air.

After a while, when silence reigned once more, Vama and the Doctor raised their heads and looked warily around them. All the robots were scattered either in a disarray of parts, or whole . . . but nonetheless, destroyed. The Doctor abandoned his safe position and ventured out, followed by Vama.



"Hopefully, that's the end of it," whispered the Doctor.

One by one, Peri, Deltar and the surviving guards joined them, quietly surveying the battle scarred area.

"Let's go back to base," said Vama. "We'd better check on the results of this exercise."

As they made their way back, they clambered over and picked their way through dead metallic bodies. None had survived . . . and neither had the weed.

Back in Vama's control tower, Vama immediately operated the Luna Scanner. The whole of the planet was covered by this, enabling them to see the results of their defence plan and the extent of the damage sustained.

"It appears to be . . . dare I say it . . . all clear!" reported Vama, with a relieved smile.

"Yes, once the heart was destroyed, it would bring about a chain reaction. The life force of the weed, however wide-spread, was linked to the crater, where it all started. Thus, it and the robots were killed when the heart was," explained the Doctor. "I thought we'd be successful!"

"Thank goodness it's all over," said Peri.

"That goes for all of us," agreed Vama.

"Yes, and I think it's time we disappeared too," said the Doctor, turning to Peri.

"Do come again, Doctor . . . and Peri of course," said Vama. "You're always welcome here."

"Perhaps when we come again," said the Doctor, "you will have regenerated. You really should try a new body, you know!"

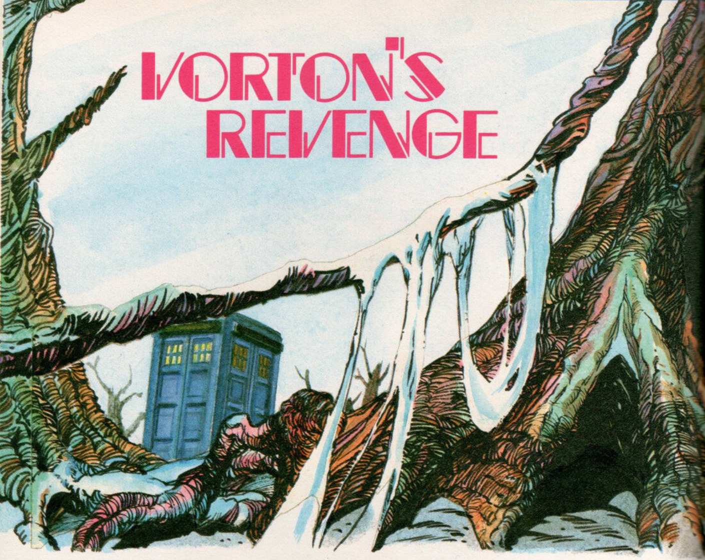
"Oh, no, Doctor," laughed Vama, "I'm happy with the one I've got . . . besides, I'm not sure you did too well by regeneration!" he mocked, eyeing the Doctor up and down teasingly.

"Goodbye!" called Peri and the Doctor.

"Goodbye!" Vama called back. "I hope next time you come, things will be more peaceful!"

He was still waving as the Tardis whirred into life and dematerialised, on its way to . . . goodness knows where!

VORTON'S REVENGE



Peri, the Doctor's assistant, lay amongst the fallen debris, feeling stunned and weak. Putting a hand to her aching head, she tried to piece her thoughts together. What had happened? Her eyes told her the indestructible Tardis had crashed, but her mind was completely blank.

A sudden thought flashed rudely into her senses to clear the haziness. Where was the Doctor? As if in answer to her thought, a shaft of light shone across to her. Looking in the direction it came from, she saw the Doctor standing in the open doorway of the Tardis.

"What on earth happened . . . and where are we?" she asked him as she staggered to join him.

"Mmh . . . it's hardly a case of what on 'Earth' happened, although the atmospheric counter shows that the atmosphere here is very similar to that of the Earth," replied the Doctor. "No, I suspect we were brought here. Some force pulled the Tardis here."

"Pulled it here?" Peri was hopelessly confused.

"Mmh," was the Doctor's only answer as he pondered on the idea. "Come on, we'd better try and find out why we are here – and, indeed, where 'here' is!"

They had landed in the middle of what looked like a forest, but one that had died a long time ago. The brown stumps may at one time have resembled the proud trees of Earth, but now the ground was coarse and dry. There was no sign of life anywhere, and even the air smelt stale.

"This place is like some kind of forgotten world," whispered Peri, afraid to raise her voice for fear of what evil being might hear her.

"It does look as if some catastrophe has happened to kill the planet, but if that is the case, we may yet find survivors," said the Doctor loudly, not sharing Peri's fear.

There was a sudden flash and a white beam of energy cut through a cluster of stumps to their left.

"Aaaah!" screamed Peri. "What's happening?!"

Four humanoid figures strode towards them carrying awesome-looking weapons. They were no taller than four feet and each was dressed in a dark blue garment in the style of a tent, with an opening at the front at chest level, from which one grey, spindly arm with a claw at the end poked out. Their heads were completely hidden by helmets of the same dark blue.

The Doctor looked at the weapons brandished by these monsters in their fearful claws.

"Laser guns," he said to himself, under his breath.

None of the humanoids spoke, but roughly took hold of the Doctor and Peri and pushed them through the forest until they came to what appeared to be a cave. Once in the cave, they were led down winding tunnels until they came to a large chamber, built from the rock. They were surrounded by hundreds more of the blue-clad figures. In front of them was another figure like the others, except for the fact that his robe was red. He rose to speak.

"Doctor," he began.

"He knows who you are!" exclaimed Peri.

"You have been brought here to fulfil a purpose," the figure continued.

"At least he gets straight to the point – and I was right about us being brought here after all," whispered the Doctor. Then, addressing the red-robed figure, "May I ask, first of all, who you are and what this planet is?"

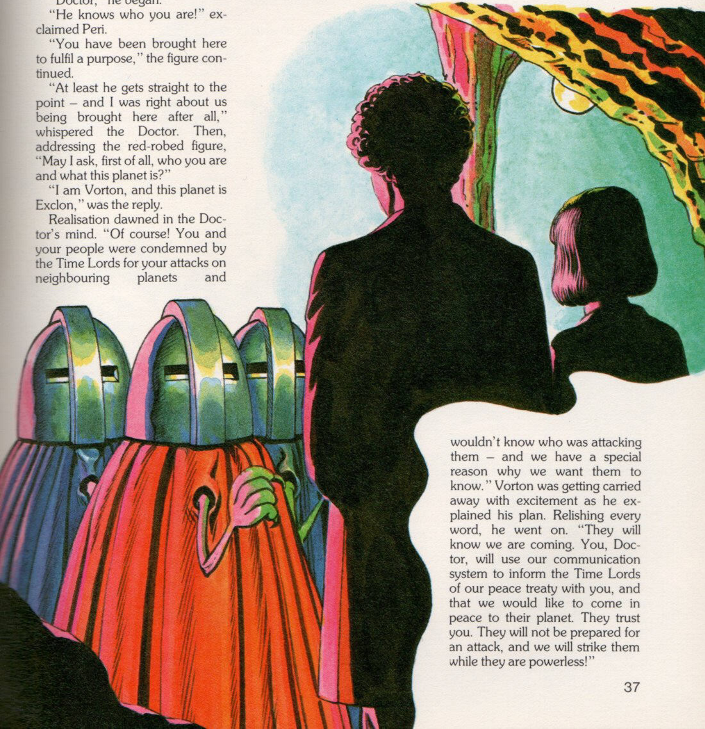
"I am Vorton, and this planet is Exclon," was the reply.

Realisation dawned in the Doctor's mind. "Of course! You and your people were condemned by the Time Lords for your attacks on neighbouring planets and attempts to take possession of these. They launched a full scale attack on your planet and devastated it!"

"Exactly!" The voice of Vorton was full of venom. "Our planet is dead. We are forced to live in caves and feed on what vegetation we can find. But we have not been idle. We have spent our time building a new spacecraft – one that is far superior to any we have built before, and weapons that are strong enough to destroy the most powerful nation, with what resources were left to us. We are ready to launch it, and plan to avenge ourselves by destroying the Time Lords!" There was triumph in his voice now.

The Doctor laughed. "Ridiculous! They'd detect your craft before you were halfway there. You'd never have a chance of attacking them!"

It was Vorton's turn to laugh. "We could destroy them before we were halfway there, but they wouldn't know who was attacking them – and we have a special reason why we want them to know." Vorton was getting carried away with excitement as he explained his plan. Relishing every word, he went on. "They will know we are coming. You, Doctor, will use our communication system to inform the Time Lords of our peace treaty with you, and that we would like to come in peace to their planet. They trust you. They will not be prepared for an attack, and we will strike them while they are powerless!"



It was suddenly quiet, and the atmosphere was charged with power.

As if to lift the tension, the Doctor asked, "How did you manage to pull the Tardis here?"

"Our control chamber is equipped with gravity control, Doctor," explained Vorton. "Anything that comes within 1,000 Earth miles of Exclon can be overpowered by it. You obliged us in a most unexpected way by coming within that limit. Now you must rest. In three hours, our plans will be put into action."

The Doctor and Peri were guided to a damp corner of the chamber. Everyone else left, with the exception of their four captors, who remained to guard them.

"We must get out of here!" Peri was terrified of what was in store for them.

"The Tardis isn't too damaged," the Doctor told her. "We can leave easily enough – but unless we can destroy Vorton's gravity control, we can be brought back. Then there's the spacecraft. If we don't put *that* out of action, he can wipe out the Time Lords without our help."

There was a rumble beneath them which set the rocks vibrating round them.

"They're testing the craft by the sound of it," observed the Doctor.

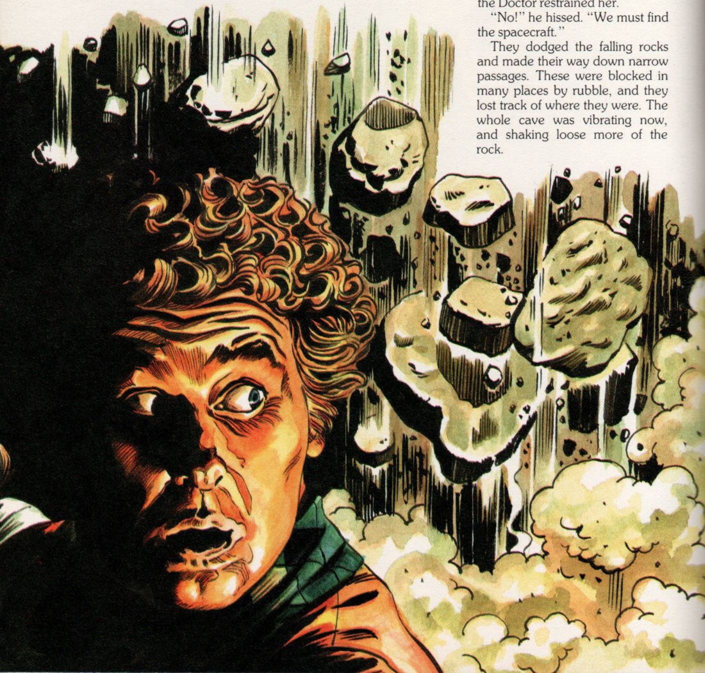
There was another louder rumble, and another, and with it a tumble of rocks as the cave began to crumble.

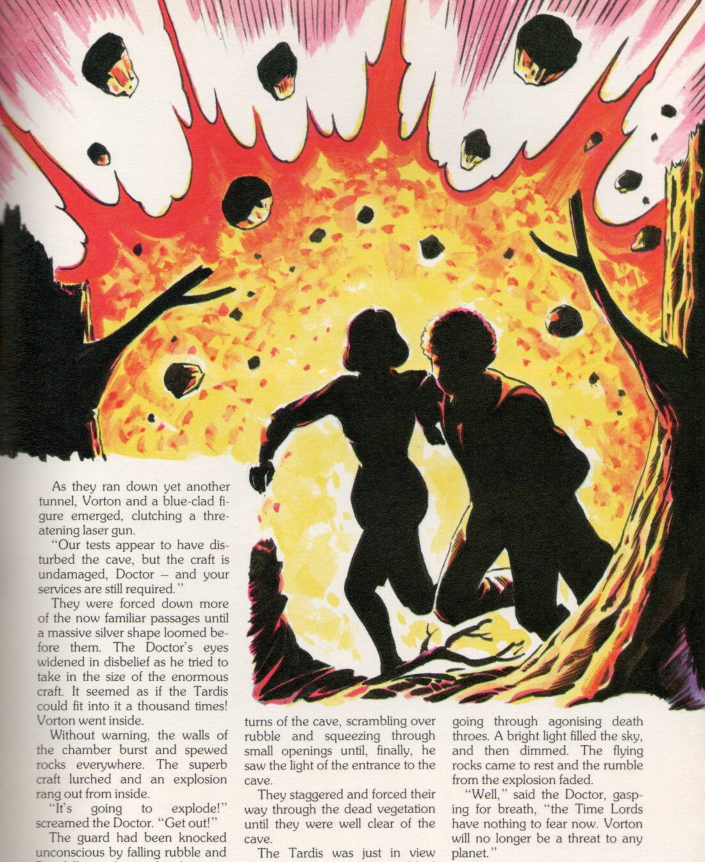
Peri screamed in horror as a steady flow of small stones and rocks cascaded down and hit her. The guards abandoned their post and the Doctor and Peri also made their escape – just as the entrance to the chamber was blocked by a crashing avalanche of rocks.

Peri made for the way out, but the Doctor restrained her.

"No!" he hissed. "We must find the spacecraft."

They dodged the falling rocks and made their way down narrow passages. These were blocked in many places by rubble, and they lost track of where they were. The whole cave was vibrating now, and shaking loose more of the rock.





As they ran down yet another tunnel, Vorton and a blue-clad figure emerged, clutching a threatening laser gun.

"Our tests appear to have disturbed the cave, but the craft is undamaged, Doctor – and your services are still required."

They were forced down more of the now familiar passages until a massive silver shape loomed before them. The Doctor's eyes widened in disbelief as he tried to take in the size of the enormous craft. It seemed as if the Tardis could fit into it a thousand times! Vorton went inside.

Without warning, the walls of the chamber burst and spewed rocks everywhere. The superb craft lurched and an explosion rang out from inside.

"It's going to explode!" screamed the Doctor. "Get out!"

The guard had been knocked unconscious by falling rubble and Peri fell over him in her hurry to escape, wrenching her leg.

The Doctor grabbed her by her waist and half carried, half dragged her through the twists and turns of the cave, scrambling over rubble and squeezing through small openings until, finally, he saw the light of the entrance to the cave.

They staggered and forced their way through the dead vegetation until they were well clear of the cave.

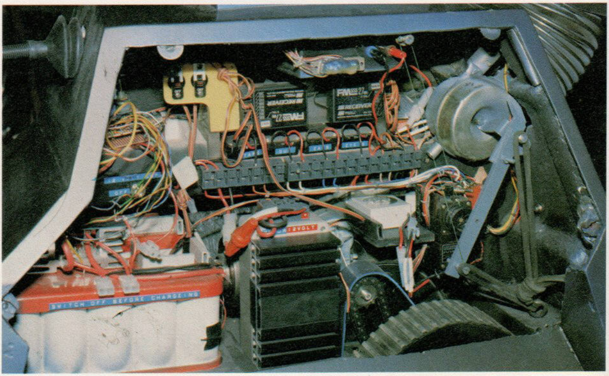
The Tardis was just in view when a deafening explosion lifted them off their feet and catapulted them a few feet, to land on the hard, unyielding ground. It seemed as if the whole planet was going through agonising death throes. A bright light filled the sky, and then dimmed. The flying rocks came to rest and the rumble from the explosion faded.

"Well," said the Doctor, gasping for breath, "the Time Lords have nothing to fear now. Vorton will no longer be a threat to any planet."

"Thank goodness!" replied Peri – and promptly fainted.

"Time for us to leave," the Doctor said to her unconscious form as he carried her into the Tardis.

K9 as he appeared on screen in *Warriors' Gate* . . .

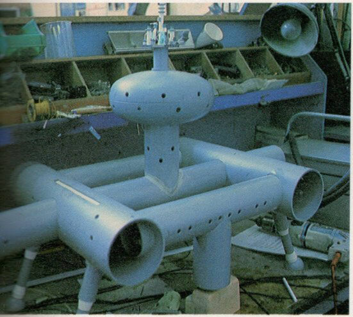


. . . and what his electronic innards look like.

SPECIAL EFFECTS

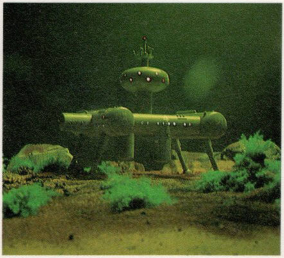
by Brenda Apsley

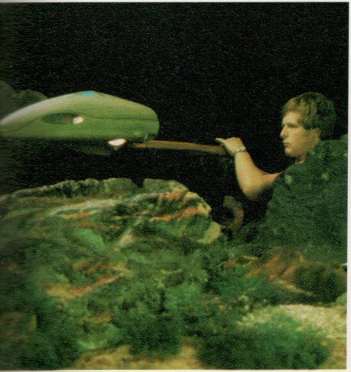
"If it can be imagined, it can be made". That was the maxim when a scenic designer and an engineer set up the BBC's special effects department in 1955. And though the department is now some 60-strong, the aims of the department are still the same: to create on screen what started out in the writer's imagination.



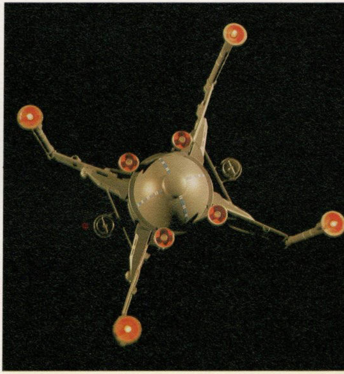
Sea Base 4 under construction in the special effects workshop . . .

and as it appeared on film in *Warriors of the Deep*.



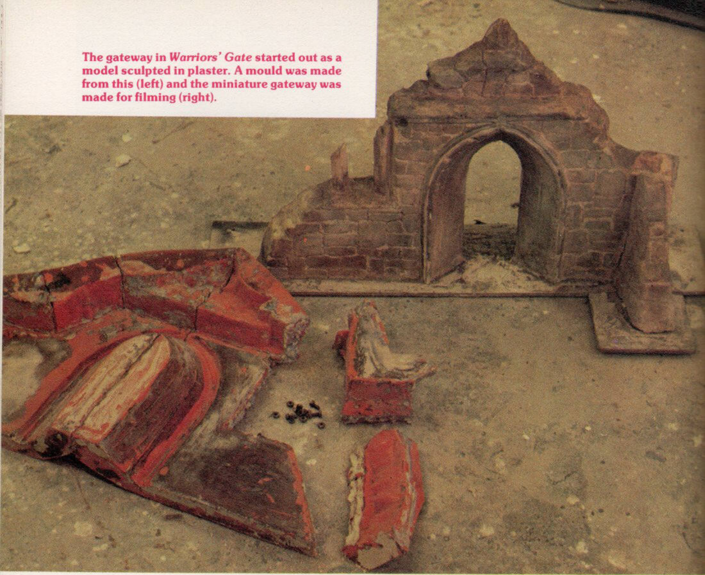


Another miniature being manipulated during filming for *Warriors of the Deep*. The operator gives a good idea of scale.



Sentinel 6, another *Warriors of the Deep* miniature.

The visual effects team (20 designers, the rest assistants) work on every type of programme, from children's shows to light entertainment series, factual programmes like *Tomorrow's World*, to *Doctor Who*. Set design, costume and make up departments' responsibilities are logical and clear-cut; the effects department handles just about anything else, be it making a very accurate model of a space satellite to staging a spectacular fake explosion for the cameras.



The gateway in *Warriors' Gate* started out as a model sculpted in plaster. A mould was made from this (left) and the miniature gateway was made for filming (right).

Let's say a visual effects designer has been chosen for a *Doctor Who* story. First of all he will read the script, marking it wherever relevant effects work appears, perhaps the creation of an undersea craft, a laser stun gun, or an explosion.

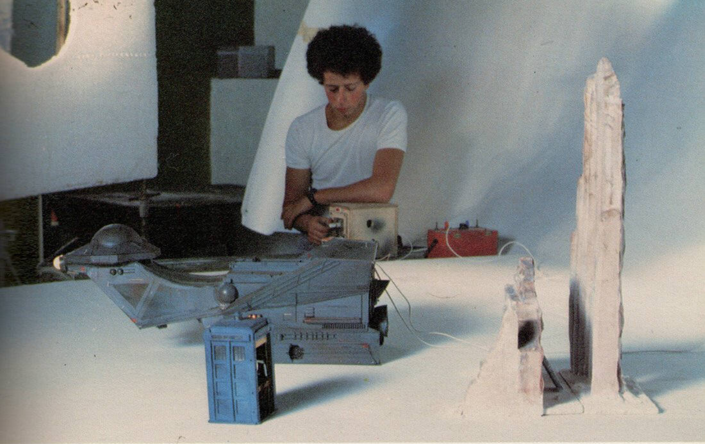
He will meet the director to talk about the 'feel' of the story, then there will be a pre-planning meeting attended by the director, producer, scenic designer, costume designer and electronic effects designer. Here the whole story is discussed fully, and at the end of the meeting they will all know what is expected of them. It is at this stage that any changes or cuts are made in the script, perhaps if the budget will not allow some expensive effect which is incidental to the story, or simply that there is not enough time to make all the equipment that is called for.

After the pre-planning who-does-what meeting work starts in earnest. The visual effects designer has a pretty free hand, and can use his imagination on a show like *Doctor Who*. He will start to make up simple objects, but more complicated things will be drawn up in detail and usually shown to the director for his OK. Practical considerations are made: Does the gun carried by a guard have to fire? (Electronics people will make sure that it does). Has one character to hit another with the laser stunner? (The model will have to be very light and fall apart easily). Will the gun get dropped, and possibly damaged? A rubber one will be used.

In *Warriors of the Deep* the Silurian masks posed various problems: Does the actor inside have to see out of the mask? Does he have to speak? Turn his head? Practical questions like this dictate design.

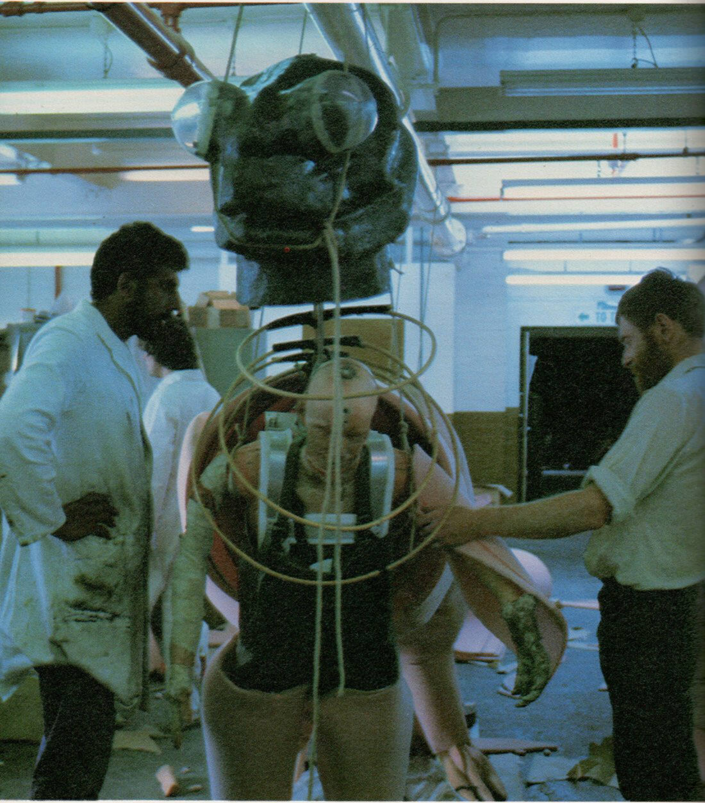
Once the designs have been achieved, the models, masks, guns, etc are actually made. Effects is very much a manufacturing department; 90% of work is carried out within the department (usually by the assistants), the rest by contractors.

The designer must also book special equipment, perhaps a dry ice machine for making swirls of smoke, or a flame fork, and he will note and plan



A shot taken in the studio during filming. The gateway is shown side-on, with the Tardis in the foreground, ready for . . .

. . . the explosion! Carefully controlled pyrotechnics destroy the gateway.



An actor is installed in a very cumbersome costume. Practical considerations have played their part in its design: does the actor have to move his head? See out? Speak?

for any other piece of equipment that may be needed.

Budgeting is also the responsibility of the designer, and it is very important; money for TV programmes is limited.

Deadlines have to be met, too. The designer must decide on the order of priority for various models and effects – remember, a TV programme is never shot in the order you see it at home. Model filming sessions, studio and film or outside broadcast sessions must all be fitted in.

The visual effects designer liaises with the other design elements; visual effects, costume and makeup may all be involved in designing and making monsters or aliens. The Sea Devil heads, for example, were produced by the costume department, but their eyelids were made to open and close by visual effects. Mechanical props like the Daleks and K9 are built – and operated – by the visual effects team.

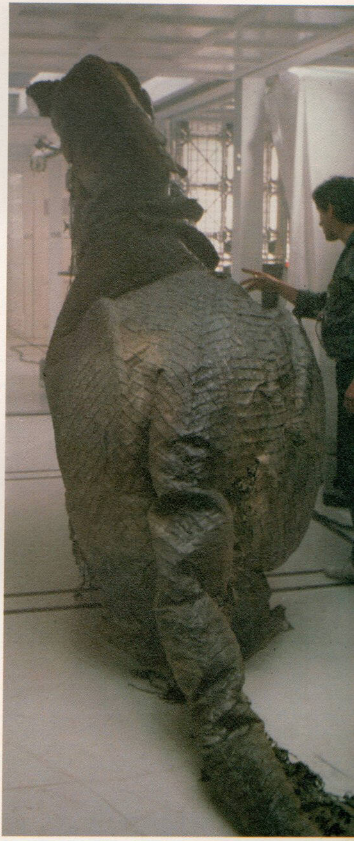
The range of things made in the visual effects department is very wide, but it can be roughly broken down into three areas:

1. Models and miniatures – imaginary, as in the case of science fiction space craft, or real, as in a detailed space shuttle scale model.
2. Special properties – which means things like guns, laser cannon, bits of the set that light up, slide aside, rise up, etc.
3. Floor effects – which includes anything created on the studio floor, like rain, snow, explosions, dry ice smoke or collapsing walls.

The designer is still on hand when filming starts, to make sure all the props and effects are perfect. He will operate models like K9 and is responsible for explosions on the studio floor. Pyrotechnics are potentially dangerous, even in a controlled environment, and the designer must ensure safety for both people and equipment. It is a part of the job that is taken very seriously, and can't be hurried, the aim being to create the ultimate effect – safely.

What sort of training do visual effects designers have? There is no specific training: you do the job by doing it. The job is to produce artistic designs that will work practically, so designers have to be artists – and engineers – a modern-day combination of Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci. Most people joining the department have an arts degree, and often come from jobs in film or theatre. They start out as assistants, making things designed by the designer, and therefore have to have – or very rapidly develop – a wide range of skills, like modelling, sculpting, turning and welding.

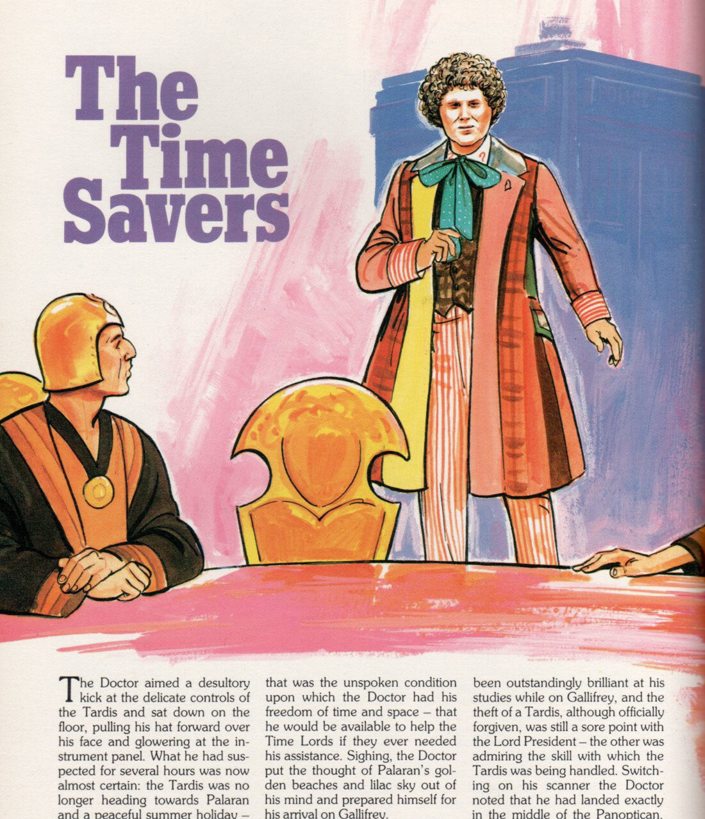
And the motto of the special effects department? It's the same thirty years on: "If it can be imagined, it can be made". *If* they have the budget!



A Myrka, on the *Warriors of the Deep* set.

We would like to thank Mat Irvine for his help in the preparation of this feature.

The Time Savers



The Doctor aimed a desultory kick at the delicate controls of the Tardis and sat down on the floor, pulling his hat forward over his face and glowering at the instrument panel. What he had suspected for several hours was now almost certain: the Tardis was no longer heading towards Palaran and a peaceful summer holiday – the controls had been overridden and the course was set irreversibly for Gallifrey. Undoubtedly the Time Lords wanted something; that was the unspoken condition upon which the Doctor had his freedom of time and space – that he would be available to help the Time Lords if they ever needed his assistance. Sighing, the Doctor put the thought of Palaran's golden beaches and lilac sky out of his mind and prepared himself for his arrival on Gallifrey.

While one part of the Doctor's mind was speculating on the reason why the Time Lords wanted him – after all, he had not been outstandingly brilliant at his studies while on Gallifrey, and the theft of a Tardis, although officially forgiven, was still a sore point with the Lord President – the other was admiring the skill with which the Tardis was being handled. Switching on his scanner the Doctor noted that he had landed exactly in the middle of the Panoptican, the meeting place of the Council of Time Lords, and that the Council was in session; twenty four of the most important and influential

Time Lords were seated in a circle. It was into the middle of this circle that the Doctor stepped when he opened the door of the Tardis.

"Doctor." The deep voice of the Lord President greeted him. "Please be seated – a place has been prepared for you."

"What?" said the Doctor in a tone of mild surprise. "The Twenty Four admit another into their circle? The need must be great."

"The need *is* great, Doctor, and we have no time to waste. I will come straight to the point; we need your help. That is why we have brought you here."

The Doctor smiled to himself. The Council of Time Lords admitting that it needed his help!

"Of course, Lord President, I will do all I can, but I don't really see . . ."

"All will be made clear, Doctor. Please – sit down."

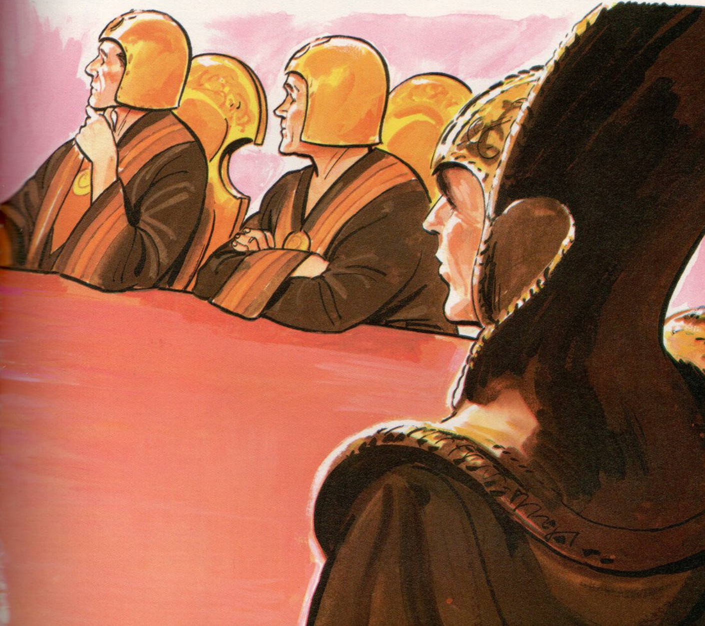
The Doctor sat, aware of the urgency in the other's tone.

"The matter concerns a planet with which you are better acquainted than most of us here," continued the President. "That is why you have been summoned. Earth, Doctor, is in danger of destroying not only itself, but also a large part of the rest of the universe."

"The Earth?" repeated the Doctor, surprised. "What's been happening there? It's usually a peaceful enough planet, and too far away from any other inhabited planet to be a major force in any interstellar war."

"Not a war, Doctor. Something infinitely more dangerous, more destructive. Something, indeed, which directly concerns us, as Time Lords. Someone has interfered with time on Earth. We do not know precisely how – that is for you to find out. Our job – *your* job – is to ensure that time is returned to normal, before irreparable damage is done."

The Doctor looked round at the circle of solemn faces. They were not exaggerating the problem, he knew. If someone on one planet travelled backwards in time and altered the smallest detail, the whole future of a man, a city, a country or a planet could be



changed – or even wiped out.

"We have located the approximate time and place of the disturbance. It appears to take place in the year 1996 Earth time. The Tardis will be programmed to take you to the approximate geographical location."

"Is that it?" asked the Doctor, as the assembly of Time Lords prepared to disperse. "Can't you tell me any more? What form will the disturbance take? What am I looking for exactly?"

"I am sorry – we ourselves know no more. There is one more thing, though. Should you require any assistance –"

The Doctor gestured towards the Tardis. "I have an assistant, Peri, who is well able to cope with the task in hand. She is asleep at the moment. We were on our way to Palaran, you see, and I said . . ."

"Yes, quite," said the Lord President. "Well, Doctor, I am afraid that your holiday will be postponed for the time being. This affair is grave, and must be resolved as soon as possible. I cannot emphasise too strongly the importance of your mission. Now, I suggest that you return to the Tardis and brief your companion. She must know exactly what danger there is; and must recognise the gravity of the situation. Doctor, your mission is to save time. You must leave immediately."

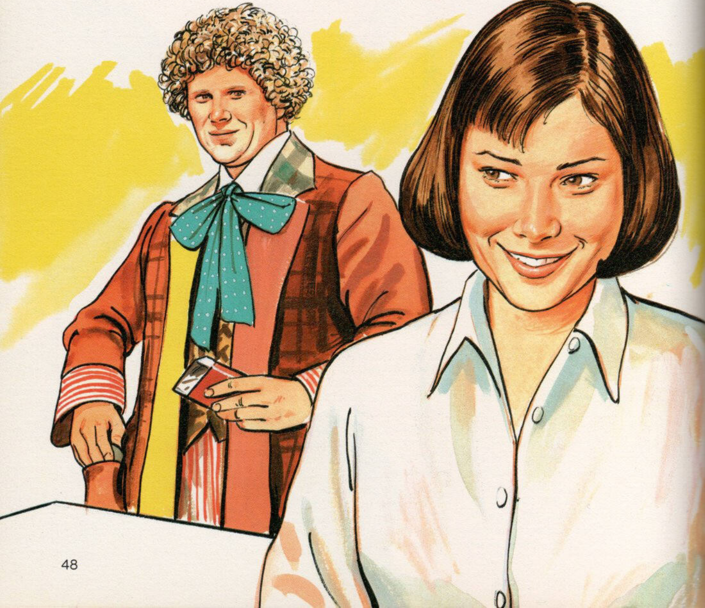
"Earth," announced Peri. "September 3rd, 1996."

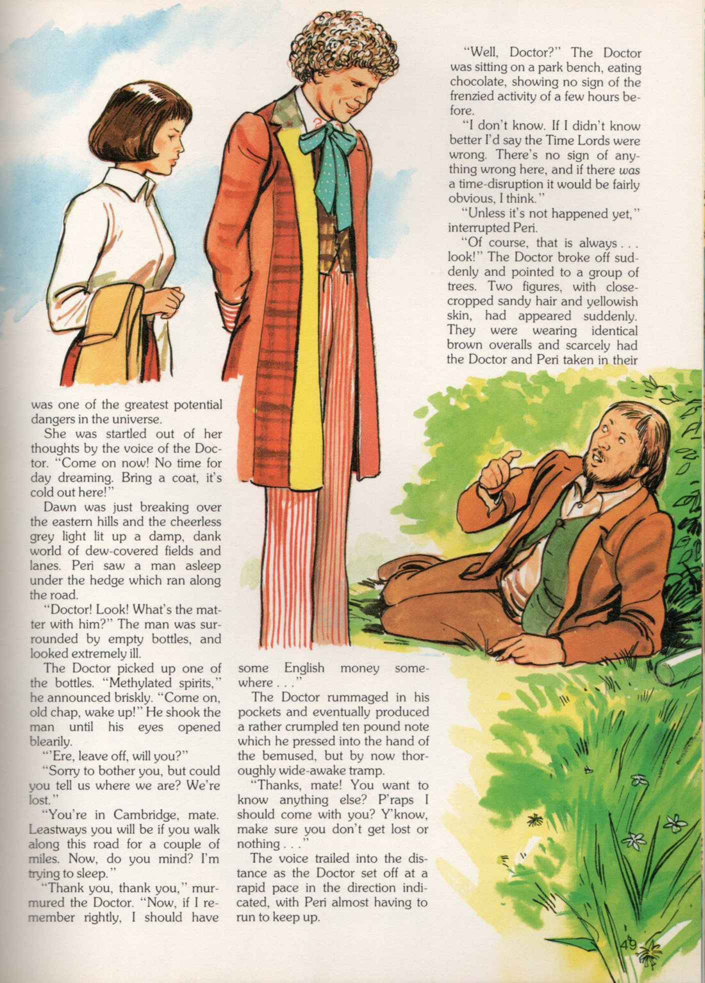
"Well, I suppose we'd better start our investigations – although I must say it would make it easier if we knew exactly what we were looking for," said the Doctor as he gathered together an unlikely jumble of objects and stuffed them into his already bulging pockets. "We must be prepared for all eventualities. Let's see now – string, tape measure, penknife, time-displacement detector, bar of chocolate . . ."

"A bar of chocolate! What's that for?"

"Well, you know what the Lord President said, we must save time – we won't be able to stop for meals you know."

Peri smiled, although she felt secretly troubled. She hoped that the Time Lords' faith in the Doctor was justified. A time-disruption





was one of the greatest potential dangers in the universe.

She was startled out of her thoughts by the voice of the Doctor. "Come on now! No time for day dreaming. Bring a coat, it's cold out here!"

Dawn was just breaking over the eastern hills and the cheerless grey light lit up a damp, dank world of dew-covered fields and lanes. Peri saw a man asleep under the hedge which ran along the road.

"Doctor! Look! What's the matter with him?" The man was surrounded by empty bottles, and looked extremely ill.

The Doctor picked up one of the bottles. "Methylated spirits," he announced briskly. "Come on, old chap, wake up!" He shook the man until his eyes opened blearily.

"'Ere, leave off, will you?"

"Sorry to bother you, but could you tell us where we are? We're lost."

"You're in Cambridge, mate. Leastways you will be if you walk along this road for a couple of miles. Now, do you mind? I'm trying to sleep."

"Thank you, thank you," murmured the Doctor. "Now, if I remember rightly, I should have some English money somewhere . . ."

The Doctor rummaged in his pockets and eventually produced a rather crumpled ten pound note which he pressed into the hand of the bemused, but by now thoroughly wide-awake tramp.

"Thanks, mate! You want to know anything else? P'raps I should come with you? Y'know, make sure you don't get lost or nothing . . ."

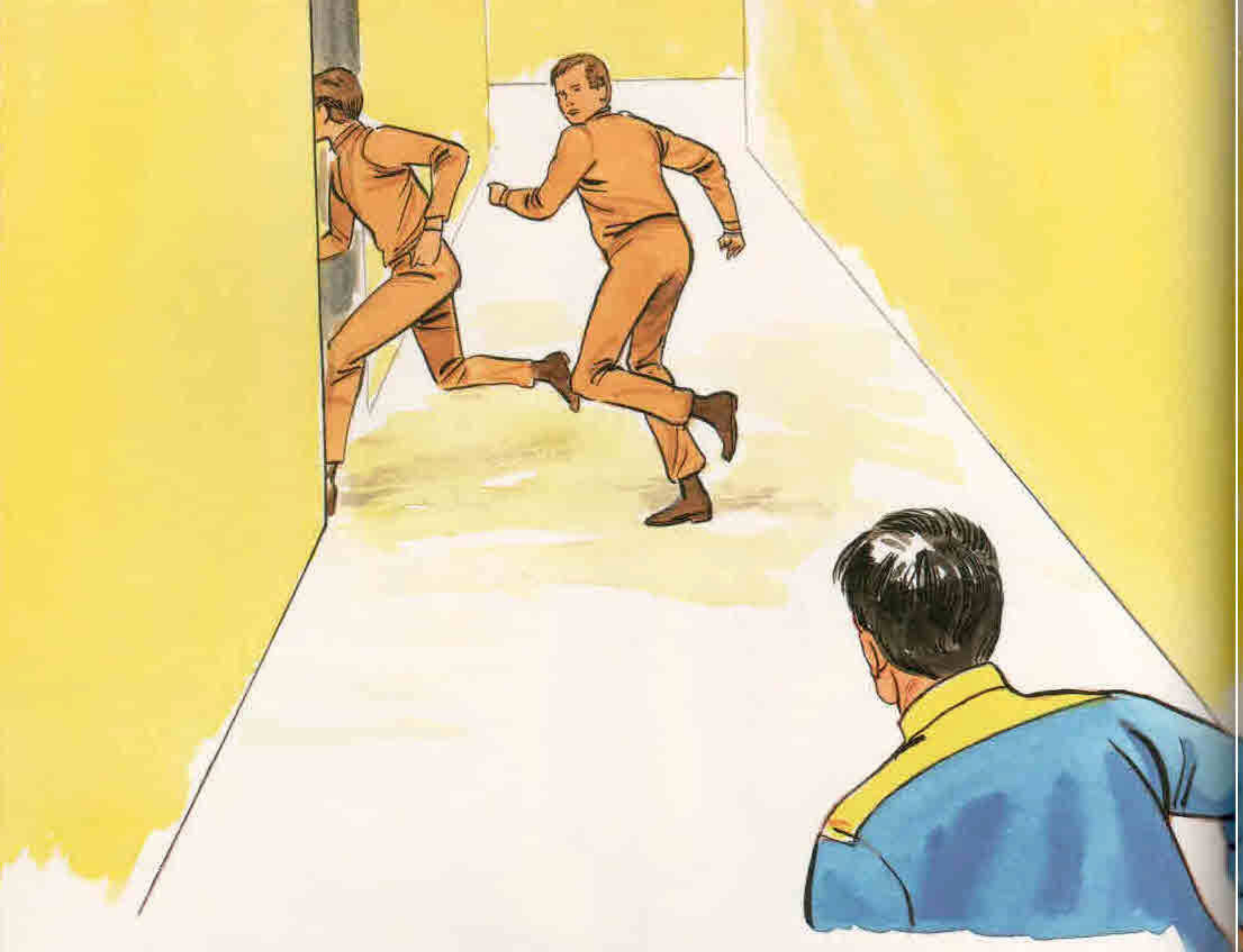
The voice trailed into the distance as the Doctor set off at a rapid pace in the direction indicated, with Peri almost having to run to keep up.

"Well, Doctor?" The Doctor was sitting on a park bench, eating chocolate, showing no sign of the frenzied activity of a few hours before.

"I don't know. If I didn't know better I'd say the Time Lords were wrong. There's no sign of anything wrong here, and if there *was* a time-disruption it would be fairly obvious, I think."

"Unless it's not happened yet," interrupted Peri.

"Of course, that is always . . . look!" The Doctor broke off suddenly and pointed to a group of trees. Two figures, with close-cropped sandy hair and yellowish skin, had appeared suddenly. They were wearing identical brown overalls and scarcely had the Doctor and Peri taken in their



sudden appearance when they disappeared equally inexplicably.

"What were they, Doctor?" asked Peri. "Is that what we're looking for?"

"I think it is. Those men were wearing the uniform of the Ipsilon Foundation, an organisation which will not exist on Earth for another three hundred years. They were time travellers, Peri, and that is rather ominous."

"How did . . .?"

"Exactly. How did they get here?"

Several hours later Peri and the Doctor were still sitting on the same park bench and the Doctor was still sunk in deep thought, as he had been since the sudden appearance and disappearance of the Ipsilon men, as Peri had come to think of them.

"But what are we going to do?" she asked for the fourth time.

"Sh," replied the Doctor, also for the fourth time. "I'm thinking."

Peri heaved a sigh of desperation and stood up. Perhaps if she searched the trees where the time travellers had appeared again she would find something she had missed before.

She was just about to start off across the grass when she heard something which stopped her in her tracks. "Doctor! Listen!"

From somewhere behind them the sound of the radio news drifted across the park.

"And finally news of mysterious happenings at the Arthur Jeffries Building in Cambridge. Police have received several accounts of strange figures which, witnesses say, materialised out of thin air in and around the building last night. No damage was done and the local police are treating it as a practical joke. That view, however, is not shared by everyone. Miss Alysia Jenkins, President of the National Union of Psychic Investigators . . ."

The voice faded into the distance as the person with the radio moved on.

"The Arthur Jeffries Building! Of course! Why didn't I think of that earlier? That's by far the most likely place for any experiments of a dubious nature to be conducted!"

"Are we going there now?" asked Peri, glad to have a chance of some action at last.

"No. Not yet," replied the Doctor, sitting down again abruptly. "Tonight. We can look around without being disturbed then, and anyway the mysterious 'ghosts' seem to be more fond of the dark than the day time. I'd very much like to have a chat with our friends from Ipsilon."

The Arthur Jeffries Building was a grim and austere structure which had obtruded upon the beautiful Cambridgeshire countryside for the past six years. It was a squat, graceless building of concrete and steel; a purely functional building designed by an architect with a singular lack of imagination and inspiration. Although nobody knew exactly what went on inside the building everyone suspected that it was something vital to the future of the world and scientists spoke of those who worked there in hushed tones of awe and respect.

Peri, although she had been told of the reputation of the Arthur Jeffries Building by the Doctor, could think of it as nothing but an ugly menace. She shivered.

"Right," said the Doctor, "there should be a door round here somewhere for deliveries. Ah! Over there. Now then . . ." He worked his penknife along the edge of the door. "This shouldn't be too difficult to open."

Only minutes later they were standing inside the government building. "Well, that was easy," the Doctor said. "I must say, I thought their security arrangements would have been better. Still, we shouldn't complain."

"Where do we go now?" asked Peri.

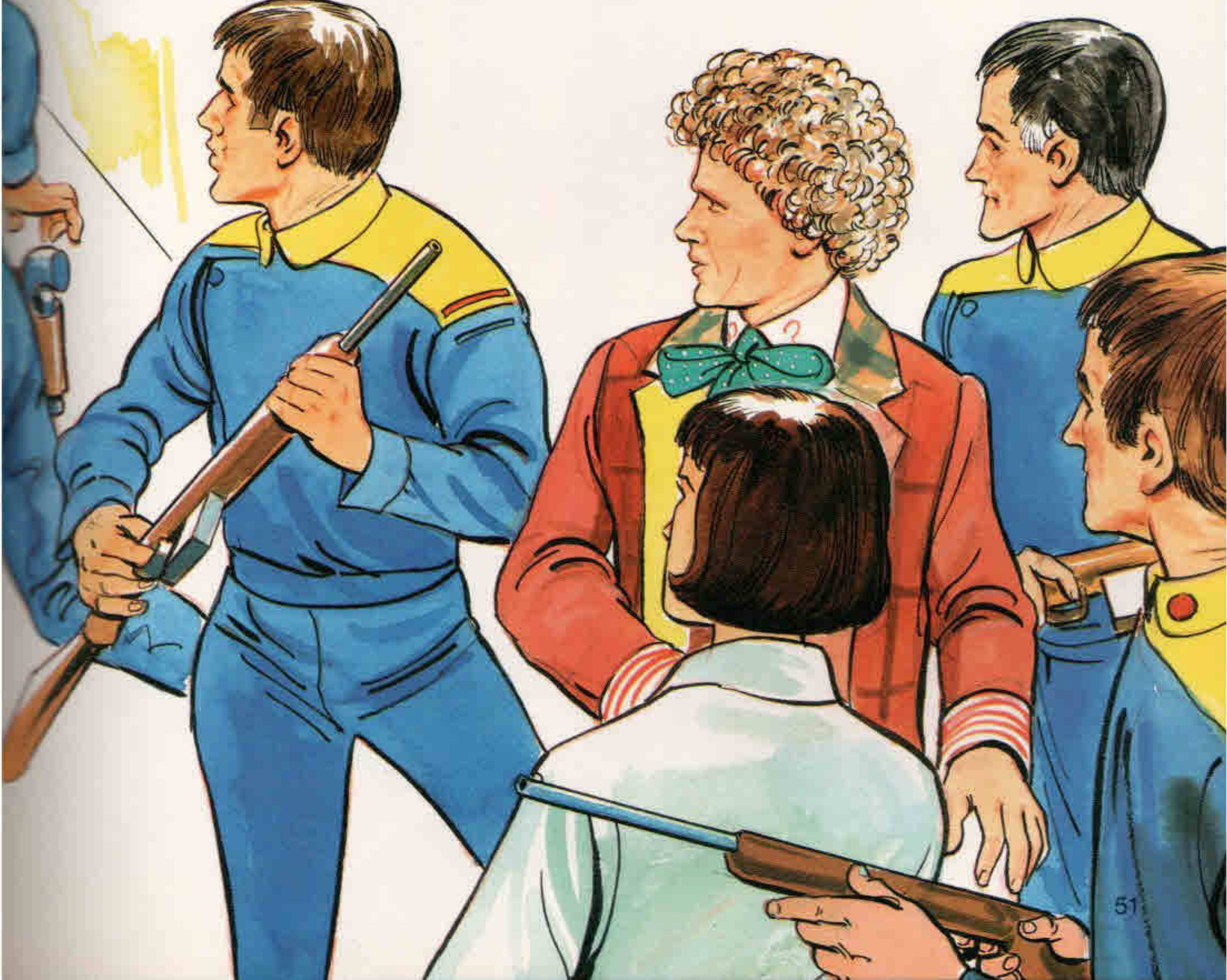
The Doctor hesitated. The building was certainly much larger than even he had anticipated. Corridors stretched away endlessly in all directions, all apparently the same. The Doctor scratched his head.

Peri knew that the Doctor had no more idea than she had of which way they should go, and she was just about to choose a direction at random when suddenly two things happened.

The first was the appearance of six heavily-armed guards, whose attitude as they surrounded the Doctor and Peri was decidedly hostile. The second was the even more sudden appearance of the two men in Ipsilon uniforms they had first seen in the park that afternoon. This time, however, the time travellers did not suddenly blink into non-existence again, but looked around, seemingly somewhat startled, saw the guards, and then set off at a run down one of the long concrete corridors. Some of the guards surrounding the Doctor and Peri wavered, until their leader, with a few curt words, sent two of them to follow the escaping intruders.

"You two!" he added, nodding at the Doctor and Peri with grim satisfaction. "Follow me."

The Doctor looked at Peri and shrugged. "I can't think why they don't just turn us over to the local police," he whispered. "Unless, of course, they think we have something to do with those Ipsilon men."



She turned to reply, but received a sharp prod in the back from one of the guards. The party marched in silence down the dimly-lit corridors, which all looked exactly the same. She wondered how anyone ever found their way around this building.

Without any warning the guards stopped and one of them opened one of the many identical doors which lined the corridor.

The Doctor and Peri found themselves being pushed into a large, brightly-lit laboratory. One entire half of the room was filled with a complex mass of wires and electrical equipment which the Doctor stared at with interest. At the other side of the room a middle-aged man sat at a desk, writing. He turned round as the Doctor and Peri entered and regarded them steadily.

"Professor Thomas, isn't it?" said the Doctor cheerfully, and approached the other man, his hand extended in greeting. He recognised the weatherbeaten face and startling blond hair of Earth's most famous scientist from an old copy of a science magazine which had been gathering dust in the Tardis for some years.

"I'm afraid you put me at a disadvantage," replied Professor Thomas coldly. "I don't think I know your name."

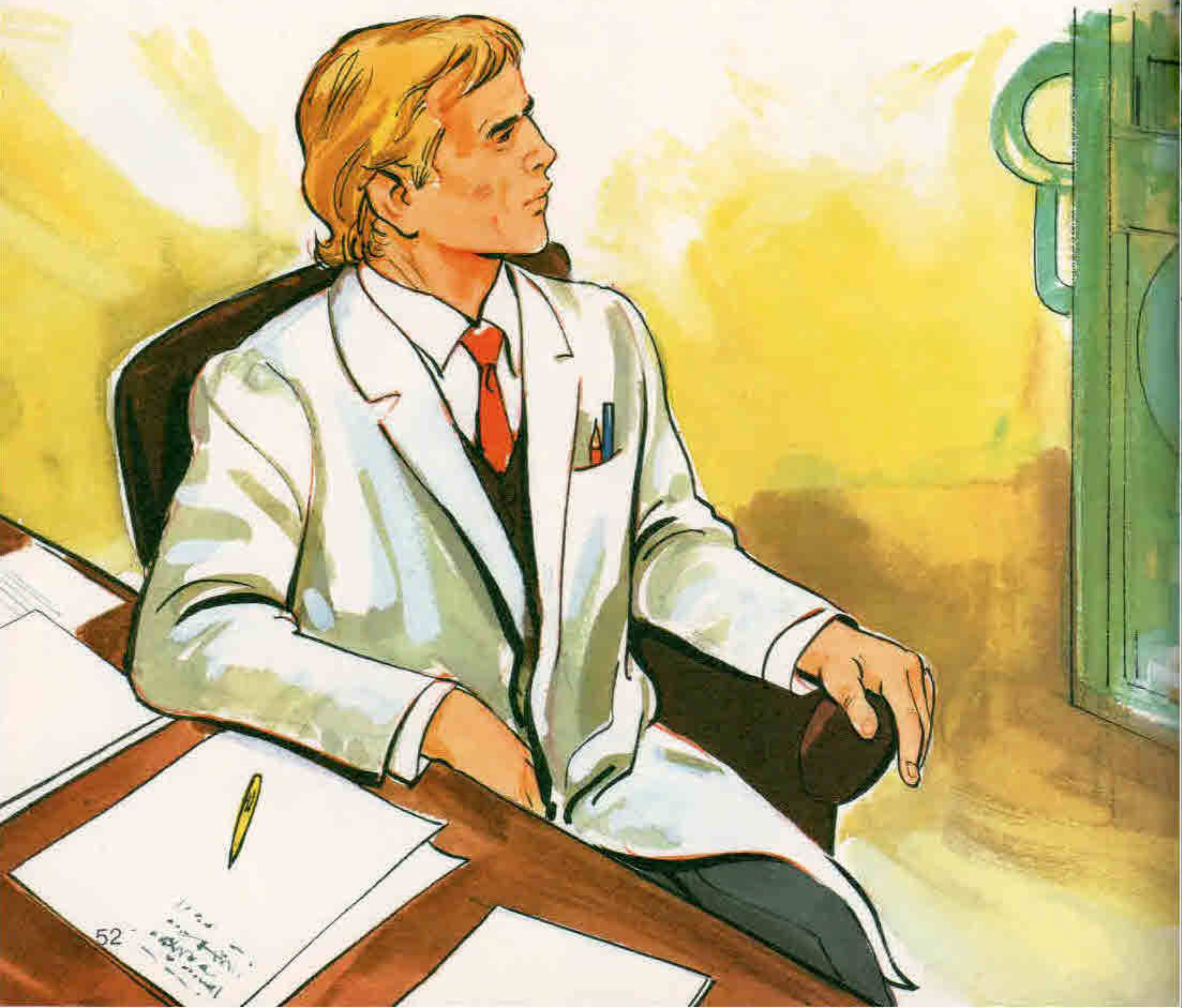
"Probably not. I'm the Doctor, and this is Peri. Can I just have a look at . . ."

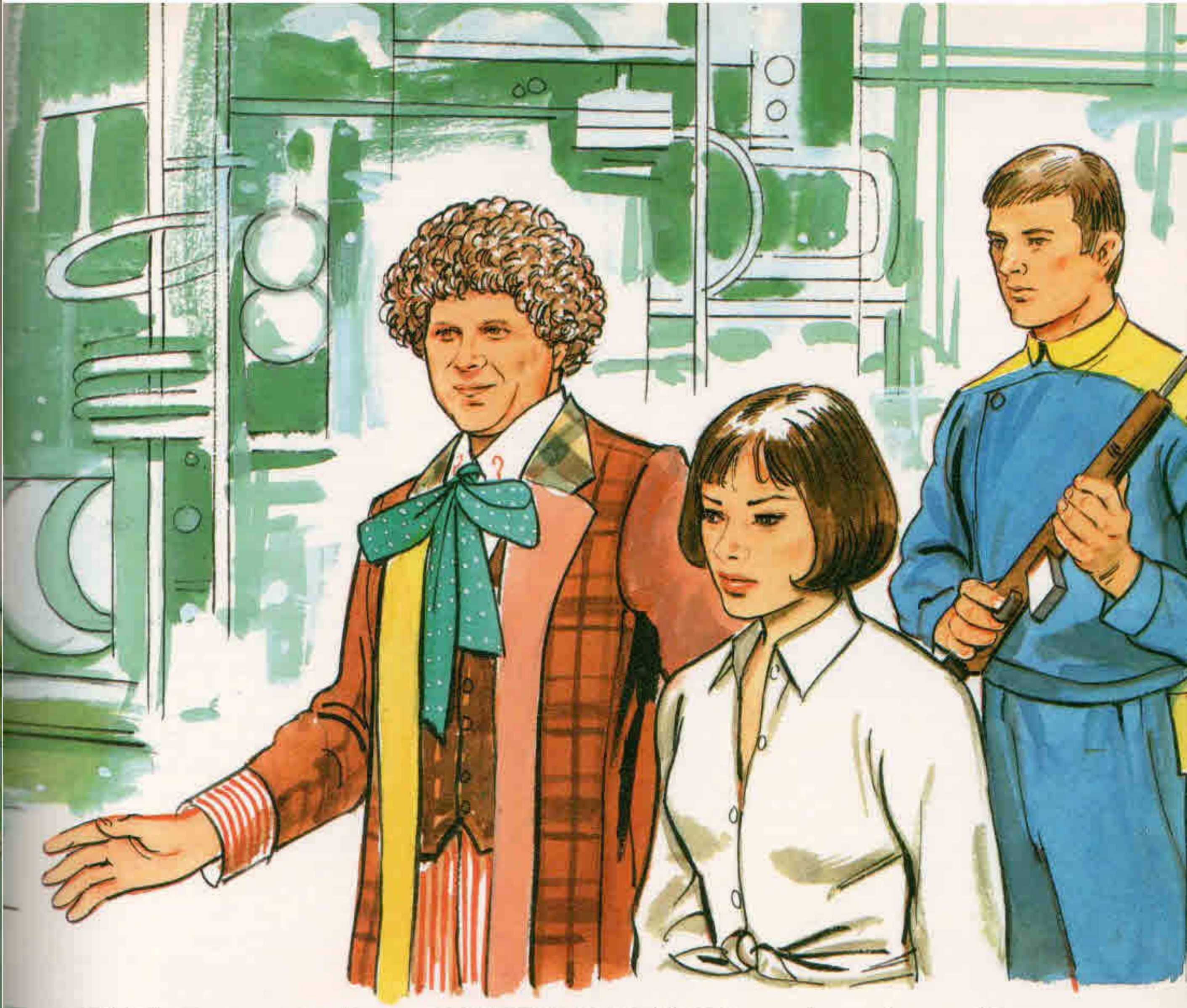
"And what are you doing here, Doctor? Your tricks with ghosts must have a purpose other than merely attracting attention – attention I can quite easily do without at this crucial stage of my experiment."

"Ah, the ghosts. Nothing to do with me. We're . . er . . . psychic investigators. We were interested in the strange events which have been occurring here and so we broke into your building to see if we could find out more." It was not a very plausible explanation, the Doctor felt, but it was all he could think of on the spur of the moment.

"Doctor, either you tell me who those people are, or I call the police and have you both arrested for breaking and entering," replied the Professor, picking up the telephone.

"All right, all right," answered the Doctor, sighing and sitting down. "I'll tell you what I know if you'll just answer one question. What is that machine you are building?"





Professor Thomas shrugged. "I don't suppose there's any reason why I should not tell you now – when it's so near completion. There have been rumours in the papers already. It's a time machine. It will make it possible to travel into the distant past and the far future."

"But that's impossible!" burst out Peri.

The professor looked at her, puzzled. "It *was* difficult, I admit. First I had to accept some totally foreign amendments to the concepts of time and space we have known for so long . . ."

"Ah . . . these amendments," interrupted the Doctor, picking up a metal plate gingerly. "Where did you first get these revolutionary new ideas from?"

"From me, Doctor."

The Doctor turned round to see a familiar figure in the doorway. "The Master! Of course!" he breathed.

"I prefer to be known as Professor Masterman here, Doctor. Surely you are not surprised to see me? Why, you yourself confined me to this planet when you stole the time-matter adjustment valve from my Tardis. That is why I am using my knowledge to benefit humanity." The Master laughed. "I am aiding Professor Thomas in his search for time travel so that I can obtain the necessary components to repair my ship. A modest plan, Doctor, surely? You cannot blame me for trying to escape the exile which you imposed upon me?"

The Doctor's hand clenched on the piece of metal he was holding. "A modest plan, perhaps, but one which may have far-reaching consequences. Do you not realise what you are doing, putting time travel within the grasp of a race which should never have it? Do you not see the harm you could do? Surely even a renegade Time Lord must have some respect for the time laws. You are changing the history of Earth – setting it on a path it should never have taken."

The Master smiled. "My need for freedom – which you deprived me of – is greater than all my inbuilt fears of breaking the laws of time; fear instilled by the cautious Time Lords, who fear only for their own monopoly of time!

Surely you do not believe that their reasons for the innumerable laws of time are purely altruistic, Doctor? Even you must see that they seek only to protect their own power, their own mystery? Perhaps not. Still, we have no time to waste in discussion. The process is nearly complete. We have been working day and night for weeks and I do not intend to stop now just to have a couple of trespassers removed. That must wait until I have made my trip to the future and obtained the missing components."

"And left the Earth with a legacy which will almost certainly bring about its destruction," added the Doctor.

The Master ignored his comment and continued working. Peri looked around desperately. Four armed guards surrounded them; escape was impossible. There was nothing to do but wait – wait for the Master to gain his freedom and let loose a terrible power on the Earth; wait to be thrown into gaol. Even the Doctor's resourcefulness seemed useless now.

The minutes crawled by; final adjustments were made. The Master positioned himself in the complex machine he had helped to make, and prepared to turn the power on.

At that moment a sudden uproar caused all eyes to turn towards the door. Four men, dressed in brown overalls, stood in the doorway. 'Ghosts' no longer, they were now solid, menacing figures, brandishing weapons.

"Nobody move," said the first of them.

Everyone froze, the Master muttering with annoyance, and the guards dropped their guns.

The Ipsilon men kicked these to one side. "You are Professor Thomas? And you Professor Masterman?"

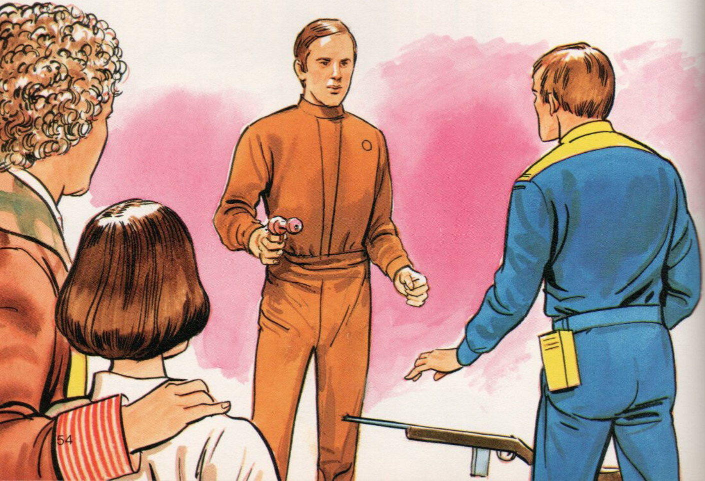
The two men nodded. "And this is your time machine?"

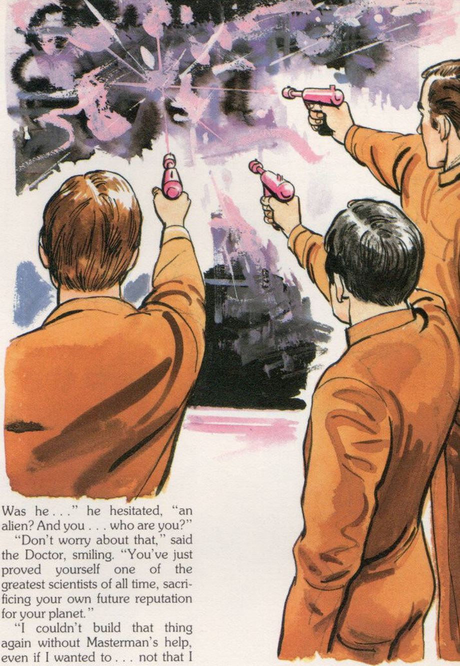
Professor Thomas nodded again, fear in his eyes.

"Professor Thomas, we cannot hope that you will understand what we are going to do, but we will explain it to you. It is only fair. You are working on a system of time travel. You may therefore be able to accept that we ourselves are time travellers from 327 years in your planet's future."

"You can tell me then!" interrupted the Professor, excitedly. "My plan – does it work?"

"Yes," replied the first man, heavily. "Yes, it works, and for a while you are the most celebrated scientist that the world has ever known. For a while," he repeated softly. "But then your invention is turned to evil uses. People plunder the future and the past for knowledge and for material wealth. By the time the authorities realise what is going on there is no future left for Earth. It has all been used up by men greedy for wealth and knowledge. Time, as you know it, had ceased to exist by the time we were born, and your name is an evil one, synonymous with the destruction of Earth. There was only one thing left to do," he continued. "Four volunteers were sent back through the chaos – it was not easy; we had difficulty locating the exact time and place – to stop you inventing





your time machine, to give the Earth a chance to survive."

"Think, man!" The Master's voice was harsh and mocking as he addressed the man from the future. "If you change this you change your whole history! Why, you could even uncreate yourself!" He laughed.

"Do you think we have not weighed the risks? Do you think we value our own lives above that of our planet? We will all surely die if history continues on the track it is on now. If we change it there might be a chance that men will survive on Earth, even if we do not live to see it."

Professor Thomas was thoughtful. "So you have come to destroy my machine?"

"Yes, Professor, and you too if necessary, I'm afraid."

"No! I understand what you do and why you do it. Take my notes and destroy the machine – I would not be responsible for the destruction of my race. I am a scientist – a creator, not a destroyer."

"What, are you mad?" interrupted the Master. "Do you believe them? You are a scientist working for knowledge . . ."

It was too late; Professor Thomas had already handed his notes to the Ipsilon men.

With a sudden movement the Master flicked the switch on the time machine and vanished.

In the same instant the Ipsilon men fired their weapons at the massive metal device and it melted into oblivion.

When the smoke cleared the Ipsilon men had gone; they had ceased to exist in the instant they had destroyed the time machine – and their own history.

"But the Master," said Peri. "He escaped!"

"Yes," replied the Doctor, "into the future somewhere, and without his Tardis. He's certainly exiled now, and he's only got himself to blame!"

"There was a great deal of that I didn't understand," said Professor Thomas, rubbing the smoke from his eyes. "Who was Masterman? Was he . . ." he hesitated, "an alien? And you . . . who are you?"

"Don't worry about that," said the Doctor, smiling. "You've just proved yourself one of the greatest scientists of all time, sacrificing your own future reputation for your planet."

"I couldn't build that thing again without Masterman's help, even if I wanted to . . . not that I do want to, of course."

"If you don't mind, we'll just slip away now, before the police arrive," explained the Doctor. "It might be difficult explaining our presence here. Now then, as one scientist to another . . . could you tell us how to get out of this place?"

The night was calm and still in Cambridge as the Doctor and Peri walked slowly back to the Tardis. The old tramp, asleep again in the hedge, did not realise that today his world had been saved.

Peri opened the Tardis door. "Where now?" she asked. "The time disruption has been corrected, although we didn't actually correct it . . ."

"Oh, I don't know!" said the Doctor modestly. "I think our presence probably delayed the Master long enough for the Ipsilon men to get there. We can certainly report back to Gallifrey that the job was well done . . . that is, if the Tardis doesn't develop a little quirk in its directional co-ordinates and take us to Palaran by mistake . . . lovely beaches they've got there . . ."

Peri smiled to herself as the Tardis vanished into the cold September night.

The Mystery of the Rings

"I don't believe it," said Peri flatly. "Does this machine ever work properly?"

The Doctor was busy stooping over the controls. "Mmmm?" he asked absently.

Peri raised her eyes to the ceiling. "This machine, Doctor," she said loudly. "It's done nothing but malfunction ever since I came aboard."

"Yes," the Doctor agreed. "Well, you know what they say."

"What who says?"

The Doctor shook his head at the control console. "No, it's no good," he said. "We'll have to take her down for a while so that I can spend some time on this. That'll be nice for you, won't it? You can have a wander round instead of having to watch me fiddle about, can't you?"

Peri looked irritably at him. "Who said what, Doctor?" she asked. "You said something about knowing what 'they' say. Who's they?"

The Doctor scratched his head. "D'you know, I can't for the life of me remember saying that," he said. "Oh, well. Let's take her down, shall we?"

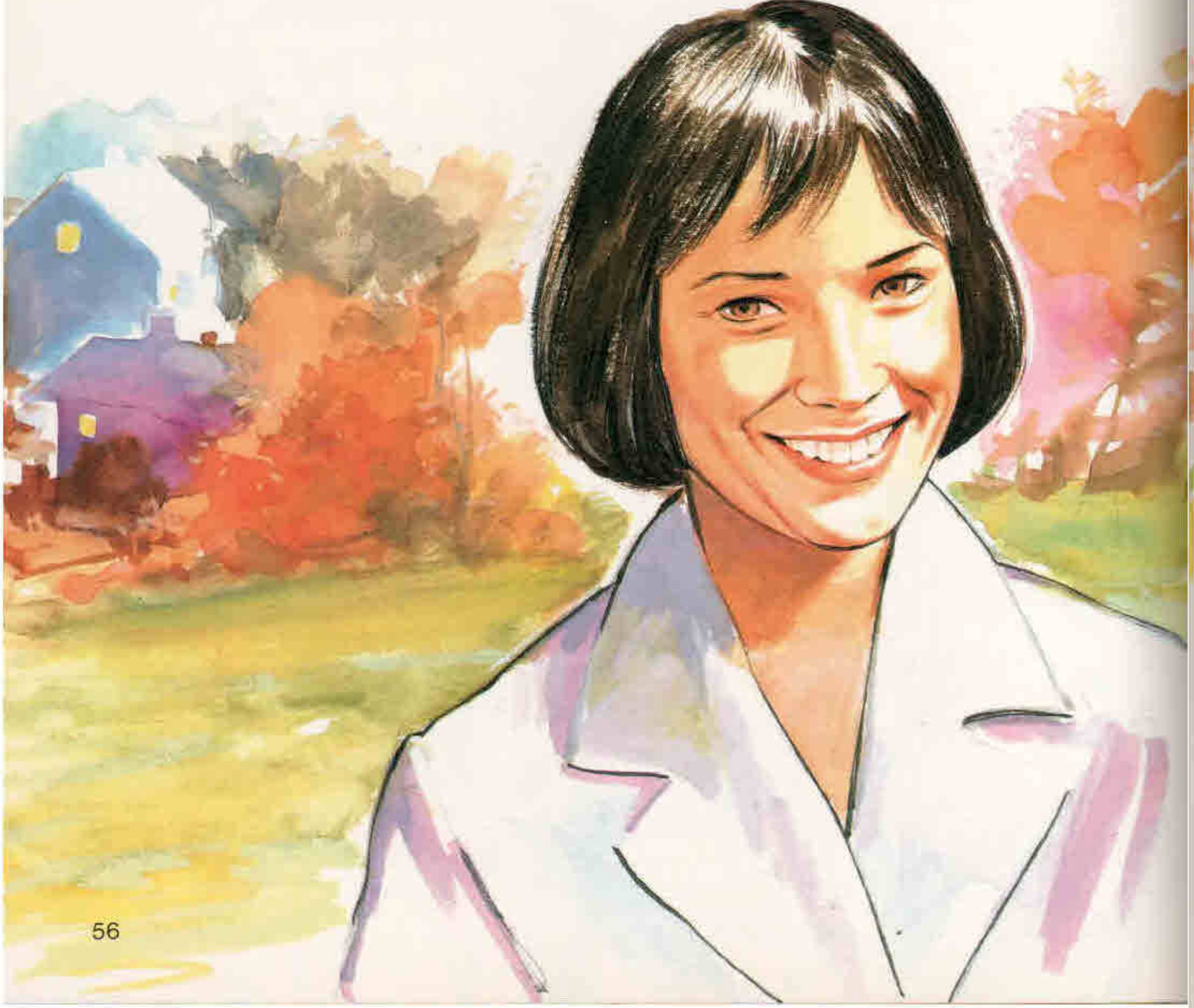
Some time later, they were safely landed.

"Earth," said the Doctor, with satisfaction. "Strange, how this primitive planet draws one back again and again, isn't it? And almost your own modern times, too," he added, glancing out at the landscape. "At a rough guess, I'd say late seventies, wouldn't you?"

Peri sighed.

"Now," continued the Doctor. "Do you think we might take a walk down to that village and see if we can buy or borrow a small screwdriver? I seem to have mislaid mine again."

Peri cheered up. "I'd like a walk," she said. "It looks cold, though, Doctor, we don't want to stay out too long."



POLICE PUBLIC CALL BOX

It was indeed cold. It was one of those autumn evenings when the whole of the world seems frosty and cold, and where leaves and twigs crunch underfoot. The sky was pinkish-blue, and even the last remaining fingers of sunlight seemed cold. Peri thrust her hands deep into her pockets and shivered.

In the village, lights were on in the houses and shops, and there was a general air of bustle about the place. The Doctor and Peri walked down the High Street, pausing to glance into shop windows. Then finally the Doctor stopped.

"Here we are," he said, and Peri saw that it was a small ironmongery. They went in.

"Good evening," said the Doctor pleasantly. "Cold out, isn't it?"

The shopkeeper eyed them both with something like suspicion. "What can I do for you?" he asked. "We're closing in ten minutes."

"Well, I was hoping to buy a small screwdriver from you," said the Doctor. "My vehicle has – er – broken down, and I've lost my own."

The man relaxed slightly. "Small screwdrivers," he said. "Right you are."

"Strange," said Peri as he went into the back of the shop. "He doesn't seem at all friendly, does he?"

The Doctor grinned. "It's the old English custom of never accepting strangers," he said. "It happens everywhere; until you've lived somewhere for over thirty years, you're a newcomer and not particularly welcome."

"Well, thank goodness that doesn't happen in the States," said Peri with a snort. "We're civilised over there."

The Doctor raised an eyebrow. "Really?" he said, dryly.

Peri blushed.

"Here you are, then," said the man, returning with a selection of tools. "Sorry to be a bit – well, stand-offish, you know – but we've been having a lot of strange folk round these parts lately."

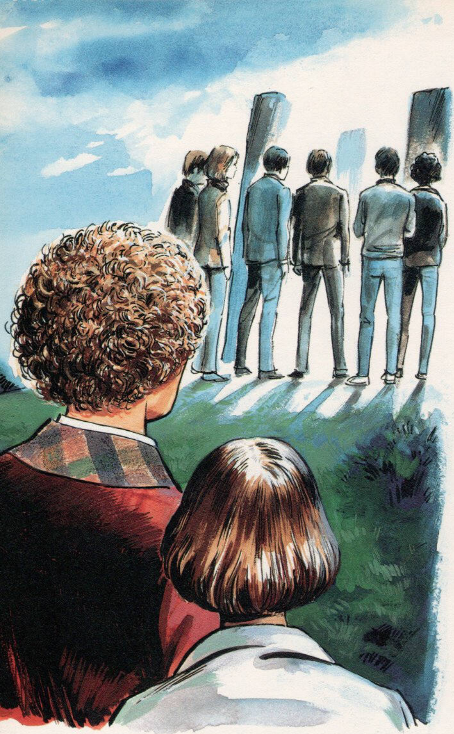
The Doctor paused in his choosing. "Strange folk?" he said. "What sort of strange folk?"

The man folded his arms. "Well, mostly young people, they are," he said. "But very odd. Not like your normal young people, all with those pop badges on their clothes and such. This lot are really sinister. They go off to the Rings at night – and there's strange goings-on up there, I can tell you!"

"The Rings?" said Peri. "What are the Rings?"

"Yes, and what sort of goings-on do you mean?" asked the Doctor, frowning.

The man glanced towards the door of his shop, and leaned forward over the counter. "Well, the Rings are like standing stones, up over King's Hill," he said. "The legend is that there was once a



king who met a witch on the hill. She told him that if he could see the village from where he stood, he would be king of the whole country within two months. And he tried, but there was a mound in the way, and the witch turned him and his men to stone as they stood there. It's a strange thing about those stones," he continued. "You can count them three times or more, and never get the same answer twice."

"And the happenings up there?" pursued the Doctor.

"Strange lights, and noises, and movement," said the man. "Folk in the village say that it's the stones come to life again and dancing on the hill, but I don't know about things like that."

"Does this happen every night?" asked the Doctor.

"I reckon so," said the shopkeeper. "I don't go up there any more, on account of these goings-on, but I have heard that others do. I wouldn't advise you to go up there either."

The Doctor nodded. "Well, how much do I owe you? Come on, Peri, we'd better get cracking."

Outside the shop, Peri had to hurry to keep up. "Where are we going?" she demanded. "Why are we walking so fast?"

The Doctor pointed. "We're going up King's Hill," he said. "I've heard of this sort of thing before – and believe me, it's nothing so simple as a few bewitched stones coming to life again."

"Well, what is it?" demanded Peri. "Space creatures or something?"

"That's one way of putting it," said the Doctor grimly. "Aliens, if you want to be more accurate. I can't be precise as to their origin until I've seen them, but I would hazard a guess and say they're from Valiark, a small planet I've visited before."

"And how do you know that?" demanded Peri.

"It all adds up," said the Doctor. "Strange lights and noises. This happened once before on earth, I believe, although I wasn't here to see it. I read about it. If my guess is correct this time, their aim is to colonise the earth, as they attempted to do before."

"Colonise the earth!" repeated Peri, laughing.

"That's the trouble with you young people today," exploded the Doctor. "You don't accept the truth for what it is even when it's staring you in the face!"

Peri was silent all the way up the side of King's Hill.

There was a small knot of people standing on the outer edge of the Rings. Most of them were young. They wore jeans and sweaters, and from behind looked just like other people. As they drew closer, Peri could see that their faces wore the blank, expressionless masks of those who have had their minds dulled by hypnosis. They were all staring into the centre of the ring of standing stones. Peri followed their gaze, and saw something which made her gasp.

About a dozen forms were moving about inside the ring of stones. They were much, much larger than humans were, and their bodies were totally unlike anything she had ever seen before. They had no shape, no rigid lines – instead they were fluid, liquid almost, and they glowed with a silvery light. They were beautiful, so beautiful that they were almost repellent, and Peri felt her eyes drawn to them against her will.

"Don't look at them," whispered the Doctor urgently. He took her hand and slapped it sharply. "You're lost if you look at them too long!"

Peri winced as the slap made her hand sting. She forced herself to look away, and followed the Doctor as he made his way stealthily to the other side of the Rings. They crouched down in the middle of a patch of bushes and watched.

"What are they?" whispered Peri after a while.

"They are what I said they were," hissed back the Doctor. "Aliens from the planet Valiark. They aren't in their own shape yet – they can't be until they have completely subjected the minds of these poor villagers here."

"Well, what are their own shapes like?" asked Peri. "Like this, or what?"

The Doctor shook his head. "Not exactly. More like – it's hard to explain – more like the gargoyles you see on old churches, but uglier. This is why they have to appear like this to begin with – their normal appearance would frighten off the villagers. As it is – well, you can see for yourself what the reaction is. But I think there's another reason for this strange appearance."

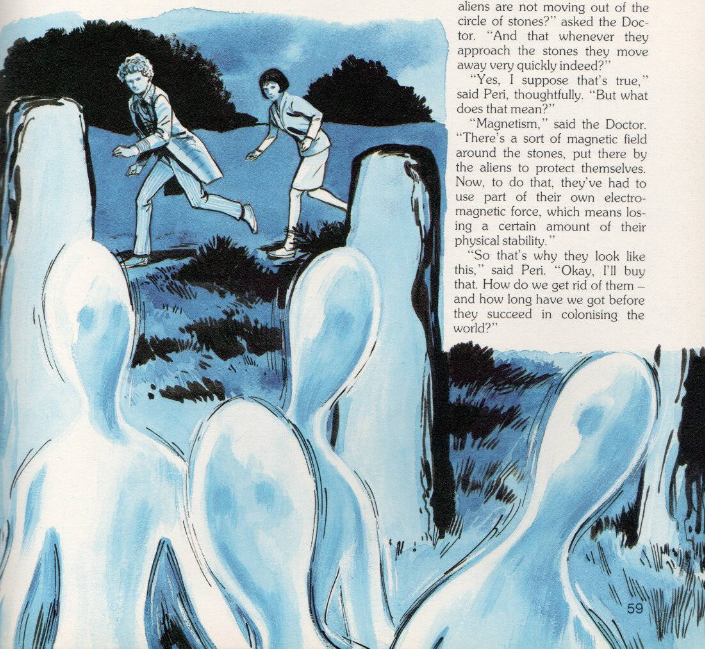
"Which is what?" prompted Peri. She shivered with cold.

"Have you noticed that the aliens are not moving out of the circle of stones?" asked the Doctor. "And that whenever they approach the stones they move away very quickly indeed?"

"Yes, I suppose that's true," said Peri, thoughtfully. "But what does that mean?"

"Magnetism," said the Doctor. "There's a sort of magnetic field around the stones, put there by the aliens to protect themselves. Now, to do that, they've had to use part of their own electromagnetic force, which means losing a certain amount of their physical stability."

"So that's why they look like this," said Peri. "Okay, I'll buy that. How do we get rid of them – and how long have we got before they succeed in colonising the world?"



The Doctor glanced at her suspiciously, but there was no hint of a smile on Peri's face.

"I don't think you understand the gravity of this situation," he said sternly. "This is no joke, however funny you might think it. These creatures are capable of a great deal when they're at their full strength. Even like this, they have the power to enslave the minds of the villagers, and the power to create a powerful force field around themselves. When they last tried to colonise the Earth, there were revolutions and wars caused, volcanoes erupted and earthquakes destroyed whole cities in minutes. Millions died during that period – and all through the activities of a few aliens in a stone circle very like this one. The only reason they failed to colonise the earth then was because . . ."

"Because what?" demanded Peri, as the Doctor's face lit up.

"Somebody broke the magnetic circle!" he whispered happily. "Of course. That's how to do it."

Peri shrugged. "Seems easy enough. You or me?"

"Oh, not us – nor for that matter any of the villagers," he said quickly. "No, the aliens must break it themselves – that is, they must come out of the circle – or, at least, one of them must. That will break the forcefield, and destroy the aliens. At least, it should do . . ."

"You mean you're not sure?"

"Well – almost sure. It's bound to do something, though, isn't it?"

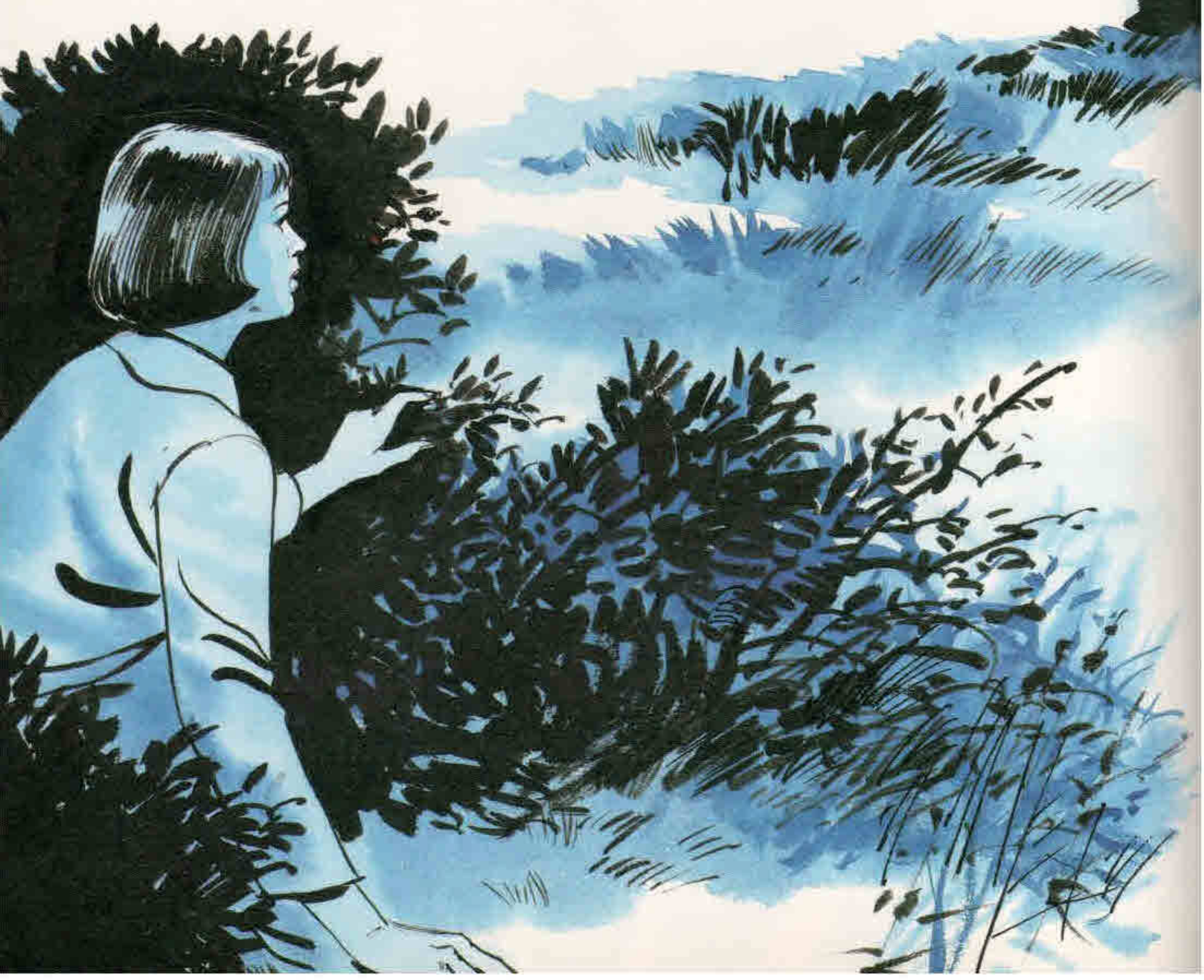
Peri looked doubtful. "Well, okay, how are you going to get them to come out of the circle?"

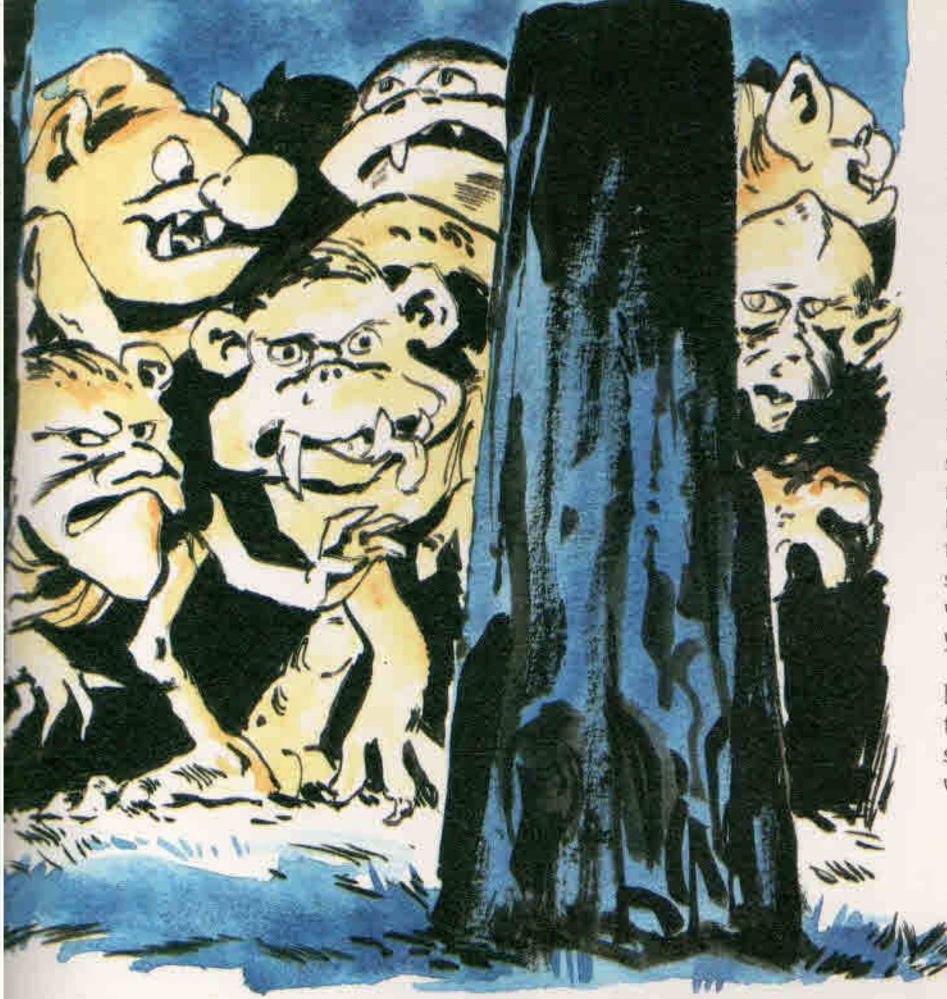
In reply, the Doctor crept out of the patch of bushes and moved quietly towards the far side of the circle of stones. The villagers stood motionless, watching the aliens, not seeing him as he moved away from them. The silvery figures of the aliens did not pay him any attention either – until he had reached the safety of a thicket some yards away from the circle of stones.

Peri, craning her neck to see what was going on, heard his voice shouting from the thicket: "You, natives of Valiark, what are you trying to do?"

The aliens showed signs of agitation, moving swiftly towards the thicket, but stopping short just before the forcefield. The villagers stared menacingly in the Doctor's direction, and Peri could hear them muttering angrily.

"You'll never succeed!" taunted the Doctor. "You are too weak to defeat the people of Earth! You have lost your powers, you'll never survive on this planet. Why don't you admit defeat now, and return home to Valiark?"





There was a growing rumble of anger now from the villagers, and a number of the men began to move round the circle towards the thicket where the Doctor hid. Inside the circle of stones, the aliens were becoming more and more confused, moving erratically, towards the direction of the Doctor's voice.

Peri, watching closely, saw the Doctor move swiftly from the thicket, away from the advancing men, and dodge behind a large tree.

"No, not there," he called, "Over here! Or is it over there?"

Peri answered her cue. "Or here?" she cried. "Here we are!"

The aliens were clearly very disturbed. Moving jerkily round the stone circle, they collided with one another, and with the stones themselves, searching for the sources of the voice that defied them.

Suddenly, there was a flash of blue light that lit up the faces of the villagers. Peri saw them blink, and turn to one another in bewilderment – the hypnosis was broken. So what had happened to the aliens?

Peering through the twigs of the bushes in which she crouched, she saw the villagers draw back, horror on their faces. Twisting herself, she saw the aliens, their silver loveliness vanished as if it had never been. They were hideous, their faces grimacing and leering evilly, their bodies hunched and bent, the colour of putty. Then, even as she looked, they began to fade away, to dissolve into the air as though they were dreams.

Finally they were gone.

The Doctor emerged from his tree and came over to Peri. "Time to leave, I think," he said. "The Tardis still needs repairing."

"But what happened?" asked Peri. "Why did they just disappear like that?"

"One of them broke the forcefield," said the Doctor simply. "We confused them until they didn't know where they were going – just bad luck on their part, really. And brainpower on ours."

Peri smiled. "I'm cold," she said, shivering. "Can we go back to the Tardis now, please?"

The Doctor turned to look at the villagers, who were moving slowly away down the hill towards the village. "I see no reason why not," he said. "There's no point in staying to be thanked – they'll none of them have any idea what happened. Hypnosis works like that sometimes – especially if the subjects are weak enough. You were nearly under their influence yourself, weren't you?"

Peri glared at him. The Doctor laughed. "It's a good thing I was there to slap you out of it!" he said, and skipped neatly out of the way of her raised hand.